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ON REPEAT

THE SOUNDS RATTLING ROUND THE SKULLS OF THE NME STAFF THIS WEEK



TRACK OF THE WEEK

SLEIGH BELLS

Tell 'Em

MIA has signed Brooklyn synth-punk duo Sleigh Bells to her NEET label and proclaimed their forthcoming debut "the epitome of how kids are feeling in America". It's easy to see why she's a fan – like her, Sleigh Bells yank discordant sounds together, adding just enough melody to sweeten the pill.

What makes their latest track so immense is the interplay between Alexis Krauss' chattering, girl-group-y vocals, and the volcanic distortion underneath – it's so needle-in-the-red, you may want to check your speakers haven't melted.

Maya Arulpragasam's claims about her protegés' articulate disaffection are a bit harder to verify, not least because of Krauss' enunciation. You assume she's railing against conformity and oppression – but who knows, it could be about *Pineapple Dance Studios*.

It's rare that something can be so anthemic and ragged at the same time

Still, who cares when the end result is this thrilling? After three minutes, you're left agape that something can be so anthemic and so ragged at the same time.

Luke Lewis, Deputy Editor, NME.COM

Free download from www.infinitybells.com



SCHOOL OF SEVEN BELLS

Babelonia

With cheekbones cocked and fringes buffed, School Of Seven Bells return with a free download, ahead of their second album, which showcases a confident upgrading of their shoegaze into, well, a slightly dancier shoegaze. It's the spooked underbelly of MBV's 'Soon', less about E, more about 'Eeeks'. **Martin Robinson, Deputy Editor**

Free download from www.fulltimehobby.co.uk/babelonia now

RICHARD JAMES

When You See Me (In The Pouring Rain)

Ex-Gorky's Zygotic Mynci man RJ's June-bound album 'We Went Riding' is set to prove that you can make amazing modern folk music even if you're not the third cousin of some Mumford & Sons triangle player or other. This is the lead single, and its gorgeously wilting violin hook will make your heart melt into your rib cage.

Jamie Fullerton, News Editor

On MySpace.com/richardjamesband now

WILD PALMS

Deep Dive

They've been a sleeper hit on MP3 blogs for a few months but, now signed to Björk's label One Little Indian, Wild Palms are finally gracing some seven-inch vinyl. With its staccato guitar and booming vocals 'Deep Dive' comes from the Joy Division school, but with a carnival heart and its funked-up post-punk makes us want to dance. A lot.

Paul Stokes, Assistant Editor

Download out Monday

TOBACCO FEAT. BECK

Fresh Hex

Black Moth Super Rainbow frontman Tom Fec puffs out some strange smoke signals under the name Tobacco, and Beck proves the perfect collaborator for this warped and woozy psych-pop hip-hop fever-dream, from the forthcoming 'Maniac Meat' album.

Emily Mackay, Reviews Editor

Free download from rcrdlbl.com now

PURE ECSTACY

Voices

Part of Austin, Texas' skulking clique of art-rock hedonists, this trio's debut seven-inch is as enveloping a blanket of dirge as you'll find anywhere this year. Imagine stuffing your munchies-stretched stomach with as much Mexican food as you can, only to find that every object you've ever come into contact with has morphed into beams of light. That's this. **Jaimie Hodgson, Radar Editor**

On stereogum.com now

EVERYTHING EVERYTHING

Schoolin'

Fresh from slaying audiences on the NME Radar Tour, Everything Everything's first offering from their forthcoming debut has them in confident mood. With a delicate, hypnotic take on the helium harmonies they've become synonymous with, it's also a tantalising taster of what's to come.

Matt Wilkinson, News Reporter

On NME Radio now

ACTIVE CHILD

She Was A Vision

Calling forth the spirit of Vangelis is a brave act by anyone's standards. But if you squint your ears during LA man Pat Grossi's lethargic opus there it is: triumphant 'Chariots' piano chords rising from the synth swirls, freefalling harps and operatic croons like a beautiful apparition. Special stuff.

Tim Chester, Assistant Editor, NME.COM

On the Daily Download at NME.COM/blogs and on NME Radio now

WOODS

Suffering Season

With each release offered forth, this Brooklyn band continue to provide comfort to those still struggling to exist in a world that no longer contains Elliott Smith. This new cut from the forthcoming 'At Echo Lake' is very yummy, very scrummy and almost Spectoresque on the choruses.

James McMahon, Features Editor

On Pitchfork.com now



BEYONCE KNOWLES

Why Don't You Love Me

Forget everything you *think* you know about Beyonce. Sasha Fierce is gone, the 'survivor' is no more. Now we're left with BB Homemaker. Backed by funk-pop beats, she wails with bunny boiler aplomb, "*Why don't you love me?*", proving she's just as messed-up as the rest of us. She just looks better.

Ash Dosanjh, Assistant Reviews Editor

On YouTube now

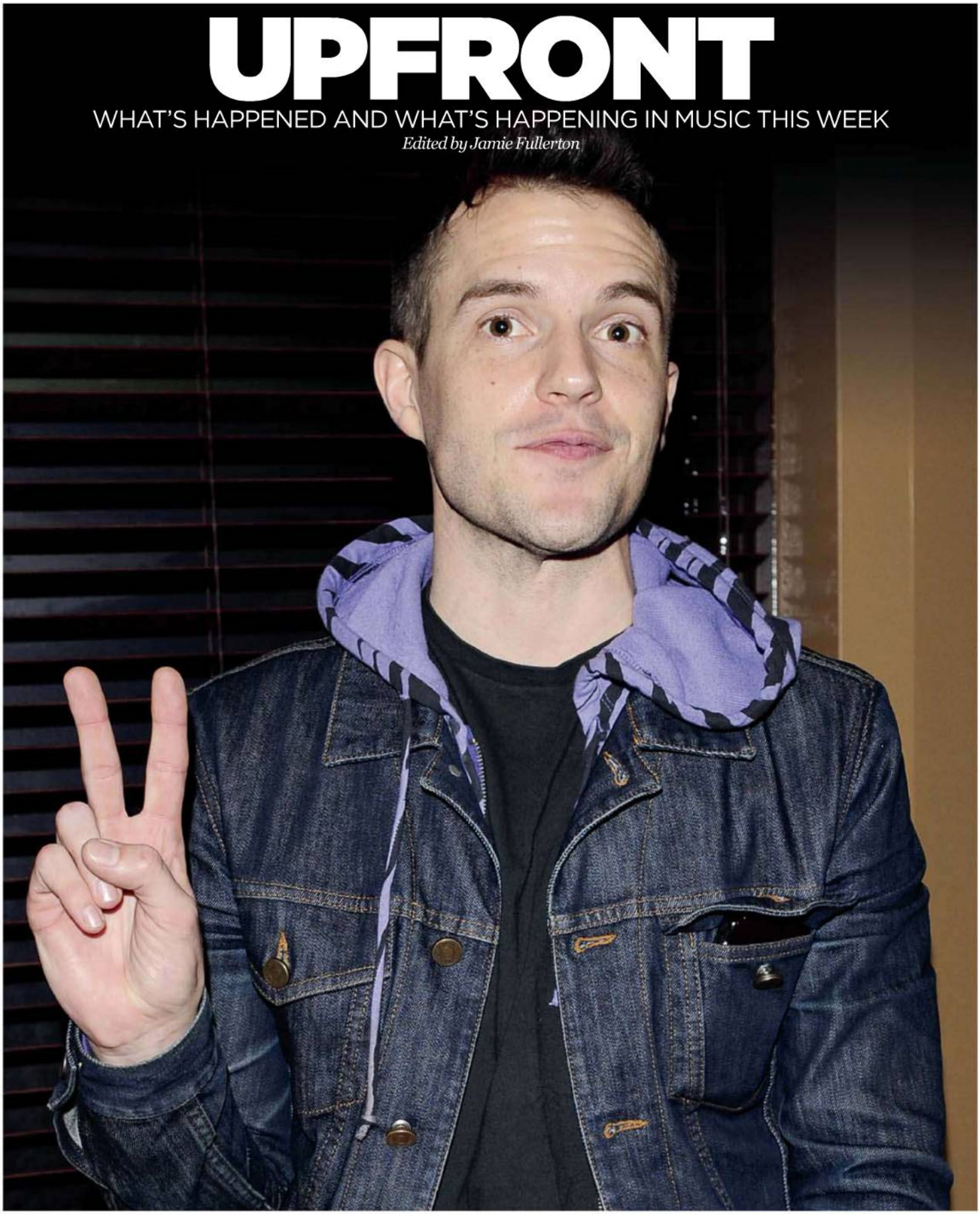
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UPFRONT

WHAT'S HAPPENED AND WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MUSIC THIS WEEK

Edited by Jamie Fullerton



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"I'D PREFER THIS TO BE A KILLERS RECORD..."

In his first solo album interview, ***Brandon Flowers*** *tells Barry Nicolson all about the LP's collaborators, his plans to play it live in the UK for us and what this means for The Killers*

THE MAIN EVENT

"To be honest, I personally would prefer it if this was a Killers record," Brandon Flowers admits down the phone from his Las Vegas home. "Some of these songs were originally destined to be Killers songs, but it is what it is. I certainly never sat around dreaming of going out on my own, but singing songs and writing songs, it's kind of become what I do, you know? And I just don't want to stop right now."

After nigh-on a year of swirling rumours, scurrilous hearsay and flat-out denials, the official announcement finally came on April 28: Brandon Flowers is going solo. With his band currently on hiatus for the foreseeable future, The Killers' frontman will release his debut solo album – entitled 'Flamingo' – this autumn, though the inevitable gossip about The Killers' future is one of the things he is quickest to address.

"I see this as something that will only make The Killers stronger," says Brandon. "And I hope that it makes us better, too. I feel like I'm getting something out of my system with this album, but I want the next Killers album to be a wonderful collaboration between four guys who are ready to make the best record that they possibly can. And I think doing this is actually a great step towards making that happen."

So rest easy, Killers fans: this is not the end of the band. But the Las Vegas quartet's future is just one of many questions raised by 'Flamingo''s existence. Details remain thin on the ground, but Brandon did shed some light on things, not least the subject of his solo album's genesis.

"From talking to the guys in the band," he says, "it was clear that there was going to have to be a long break between records. But whenever we had some time off from touring, whether it was a week or a month, I'd be going into the studio to record demos, or thinking about producers I'd like to work with, and that's really where the ball started rolling with this album. I was pretty much writing and recording it over the whole of our last tour."

Saying he wishes his bandmates could be with him for the album is an interesting statement, one that's almost as reluctant as it is defiant. In the past, Brandon has stressed that he had no interest in going solo, but he's also a confirmed workaholic, and The Killers' lengthy hiatus couldn't have come at a worse time for him.

"I'm overflowing with songs right now," he says. "It's something that, for some reason, has happened very quickly and very recently. That, combined with the other guys in the band wanting to take a good long break, is kind of what convinced me to do this album. You know, the last six years have been a whirlwind. We're very proud of what we've done, but I guess it was time to get our bearings and try to figure a few things out. We've kind of grown up on the road, we've become men out there, and we have to figure out how to apply that to our lives. I really can't blame the other guys, but I've just got this fire in my bosom that's still burning. I'm ready to go!"

Once the decision to make the album was taken, Brandon set about assembling a dream-team of producers to record with. "I guess you could say I brought in the heavy-hitters!" he laughs, and he's not kidding.

With Stuart Price (Madonna, Kylie and The Killers' own 'Day & Age'), Daniel Lanois (Bob Dylan, U2, Brian Eno) and Brendan O'Brien (Neil Young, Bruce Springsteen, Rage Against The Machine) manning the faders, it's clear that 'Flamingo' will be anything but a low-key, lo-fi indie affair; expect bombast by the bucketload. "It's a pretty good line-up, I think," Brandon somewhat humbly says. "Stuart and Daniel have been working together, and I've done another three tracks with Brendan on his own."

The album also presented Brandon with the opportunity to work with Rilo Kiley frontwoman Jenny Lewis, a hook-up he's wanted to make for some time.

"Jenny's helped me out on a couple of songs, and we also get to duet on the record, on a song called 'Hard Enough', which turned out great. She's always popped into my mind whenever I think about getting a female vocalist involved because she's a fellow child of Las Vegas, too. A lot of people don't realise that, but she was actually born there, in the same hospital as Ronnie Vannucci Jr, only a few weeks apart!"

As ever, his hometown was foremost in his thoughts when making the record – "It's all very rooted right here in the Las Vegas dirt," he says - and even the title is a sly nod to the city he grew up in, as well as to his own extroverted stage persona.

"The Flamingo is one of the most famous casinos on the strip, and also one of the first – it was infamously opened up in the 1940s by Bugsy Siegel, the mobster. It's also a street here, and one that I've spent a lot of time on over the course of my life, so it's a word that's very dear to my heart. There's even a song on the album called 'Welcome To Fabulous Las Vegas', so obviously it's always on my brain!"

Musically, however, Brandon is still coy as to what 'Flamingo' will actually sound like. Though many of the songs were originally intended for the fourth Killers album, he admits to being "Conscious of not trying to do something that was 'too Killers'. We're a band of four parts, so I found it was pretty much impossible for me to sound too much like The Killers on my own. There are definitely things on there that I haven't tried before – there's a gospel song on there, for example. I really think that this album is gonna be its own thing."

Release dates are still sketchy, but he is "putting the finishing touches to it right now," and there are tentative plans for the album to come out in late summer or early autumn. But will he be touring it?

"Oh, hell yeah! I mean, obviously, we need to make sure that people want to hear it first. But we'll definitely be coming to the UK. And I'm up for doing the festival circuit if they want me!"

Talking to Brandon, it's clear that he's excited about the album, if a little disappointed he couldn't make it with the rest of his band. It's a remarkably similar situation to the one Julian Casablancas found himself in last year, but while The Strokes are back in the studio and headlining festivals this summer, expect it to be a lot longer than that before The Killers make their return. Nevertheless, while he won't put a date on it, Flowers is insistent that return they will.

"We need some time to figure out who we are," he says. "But once we do, we're gonna come back swinging." In the meantime, 'Flamingo' promises us a glimpse at yet another side of the endlessly fascinating Mr Flowers.

THE DETAILS

Artist: Brandon Flowers
Title: 'Flamingo'
Released: Autumn 2010
Songs: 'Hard Enough', 'Welcome To Fabulous Las Vegas'
Featuring: Stuart Price, Daniel Lanois, Brendan O'Brien (producers), Jenny Lewis (vocals)
Brandon's facial hair style for album campaign: As smooth as an inflated whoopee cushion





GETTY, XPOSURE

Facing page: Brandon Flowers, freshly minted solo star. Right: onstage with The Killers during their last show before starting their hiatus – at Melbourne's The Nursery, February 21. Below: the maestro hard at work on 'Flamingo'

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FLO'S GOT THE COSMIC LOVE

Florence Welch has finally made enough cash to embark on the 'Cosmic Love' tour, her most flamboyant jaunt to date

FRONT ROW

"I lost my virginity to 'Blinding'," a ginger-haired Welch-alike named Aoife exclaims to her friend at Dublin's Olympia during Florence + The Machine's second of two sold-out shows (May 3). Clearly, while 'You've Got The Love' and the rest of 'Lungs" highlights are more ubiquitous on TV adverts than Rob Brydon voiceovers these days, the city's music fans aren't ready to confine their heroine to the easy-listening coffee table just yet.

Far from it. This brace of shows is kicking off the European leg of the 'Cosmic Love' tour. With touts outside trying to flog tickets for the wallet-battering sum of €150 and, inside, an insane amount of bodies squashed into the pit, it seems that anticipation about the singer's next step is high. With recent talk of science-influenced new material, one new song on the setlist and a bulked-up line-up, the tour marks the point where fans can judge whether Florence can step up above and beyond the unit-shifting 'Lungs'.

After set standards 'My Boy Builds Coffins' and 'Drumming Song', she performs one of the first tunes she ever wrote, 'Swimming'. And it seems that those TV royalty cheques have been spent on more than orange hair dye – Flo's added a string quartet to her touring troupe. New song 'Strangeness And Charm' (which, according to the singer, is "seven minutes long and pretty relentless") also makes an appearance: it's a dark and brooding number with a killer chorus, staccato vocals and screaming. The goth-reggae breakdown might turn off some of the pipe'n'slippers brigade that learned to love 'Lungs' through working out who "that brilliant singer off that advert" is, mind.

By the time we reach the set climax pair of 'You've Got The Love' and 'Dog Days Are Over', the early tour nerves have disappeared and the audience are flinging leather gloves, packets of crisps and whatever other oddities come to hand at the stage as Flo hurls back dried flowers in return.

Call her the Charlie Dimmock of indie at your peril – but with her live set-up getting bigger, along with her song repertoire, 'Cosmic Love' seems pretty rosy so far.

The Setlist

- Howl
- My Boy Builds Coffins
- Girl With One Eye
- Drumming Song
- Blinding
- I'm Not Calling You A Liar
- Swimming
- Cosmic Love
- Strangeness And Charm
- You've Got The Love
- Dog Days Are Over
- Kiss With A Fist
- Rabbit Heart (Raise It Up)

Florence's new outfit also doubles up as the stage curtains

LILI FORBERG

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TONIGHT... WE'RE GOING COLOMBIAN

The South American leg of Franz Ferdinand's world tour has proved rather influential

Franz Ferdinand may have vowed to keep schtum on what musical direction their new album will take, but we've got a feeling fans could hear some Latin rhythms creeping in. A recent catch up with Alex Kapranos at Spanish festival SOS 4.8 – where Franz were wrapping up their 'Tonight...Franz Ferdinand' world tour (pictured) – had the singer waxing lyrical about the band's recent travels to South America and, in particular, a new form of music he's been turned on to from the continent.

Despite remaining coy when pressed about what fans could expect from the new album, Alex was more than keen to give us a quick history lesson about Chicha – a South American mixture of classic Ethiopian ska, surf guitars, Moog synths and flamenco rhythms.

"Oh my god! Amazing!" was Alex's helpful description of the music. "Over there they just call it Cumbias. It's South America's dance music! It comes from Colombia originally, but it's spread all through the Amazon basin. We've been very fortunate to go somewhere and have someone show us it."

So, until Alex decides to tell us otherwise, we're expecting the chaps to reappear later this year in full on Latin/salsa/samba style.

News Round-up

Scarlett Love

Scarlett Johansson is the latest A-lister to give her thoughts on the planned Kurt Cobain biopic, after it was rumoured she could be in line to play Courtney Love (who is co-executive producer). "It would be a... challenge," she said, receiving the understatement of the year award shortly afterwards.

You What?

"I don't think her anxiety exists any more. But I don't know." **Jack White gives his medical verdict on Meg's acute anxiety, that has kept The White Stripes out of touring action.**





JARV RUSSELLS UP FILM BRAND

Cocker on his new collaborator's vocal skills – and how Eurostar could improve their seats

The fruits of what we're hoping will turn out to be *the* collaboration of 2010 is fast approaching: Jarvis Cocker and Russell Brand's musical hook-up for forthcoming flick *Get Him To The Greek* (in cinemas June 25).

Jarvis has written songs for the film with Russell, who gets his tonsils around the compositions for his on-screen singing role as rocker Aldous Snow in the comedy spin-off from 2008 movie *Forgetting Sarah Marshall*. Now the esteemed host of the Shockwaves NME Awards 2010 has given his opinion on how the esteemed host of the Shockwaves NME Awards 2006 performed on the microphone. His verdict? "I have to say, he's not a bad singer!" he tells us. "I'm quite pleased with the way the songs turned out, hopefully they're funny. I mean, they aren't joke songs, but they're supposed to be a bit funny."

Jarvis was chatting to us after he was officially unveiled as Cultural Ambassador for Eurostar, showing those repeated journeys between his home town of Paris and London seem to be paying off. Although he admitted he'd love to sort out the trains' seating arrangements. "They should have cushions on the Eurostar... sometimes people are twisted into very weird positions," he sagely asserted.

This being Jarvis, of course, following those words of wisdom we also got the latest quip about why Pulp weren't reforming. "Well, obviously money is always nice to have, but it's not like somebody has turned up at my house with a skip full of £10 notes and been like, 'You can have this if you get the group back together'. That might yield results. But I wouldn't hold your breath because you might... suffocate."

And his next solo album? "At the moment I've kind of decided not to start any sort of musical projects until about halfway through this year because I wanted to make sure everything was going OK with the [BBC 6 Music] radio stuff. So maybe more towards the end of the year I'll start thinking about doing something."

Let's start the whipround anyway – if not for a reunion or solo album then for a cushion for the indie legend, at least.

TOM OXLEY, GETTY, DEAN CHALKLEY, JO MCCAUGHEY, TOM MARTIN

FRIENDLY ALBUM BANTER

Friendly Fires have given us assurances that they won't jump in the vicinity of their own backsides on their second album, which they're currently recording. "I really hope we are not going to do what MGMT did," guitarist Edd Gibson said, referring to the Brooklyn duo's 'challenging' 'Congratulations' album. "Whatever it is they have done, we want to steer well clear of it. I don't understand why they would make such a leap, going from great pop songs to just any old acoustic music played in anyone's bedroom." So that means we're guaranteed at least five songs catchier than both 'Jump In The Pool' and 'Kids' on FF's next, right?



STREWTH!

Hot Glasto news: Rolf Harris will open the Pyramid Stage on the Friday (June 25), while The New Forgiven, featuring TV pasta sauce guru Loyd Grossman, will play at 1.30am on Monday morning. Mmm, delish.

WIN! T IN THE SKY TICKETS

Kinross looks even nicer from up in the sky. Hence we've got one helicopter ride above the T In The Park festival site to give away, courtesy of DF Concerts and founding partners Tennent's Lager, along with 10 pairs of VIP tickets. The event takes place in Balado, near Kinross, Scotland on July 9-11 and will be headlined by Muse, Eminem and Kasabian. Head to *NME.COM/win* to have a shot at winning the prize and to read terms and conditions of entry.

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HAS MARK RONSON MADE... A *GOOD* ALBUM?

With The Drums, Spank Rock and The View on board, the karaoke king's new album could actually end up a winner

IN THE WORKS

Sat behind a mixing desk at London's Metropolis Studios, Mark Ronson is making a few final adjustments before playing us a song from his next album. Featuring a rap from Q-Tip and vocals from Yeah Yeah Yeahs' touring keyboardist MNDR, even on first listen 'Cruel World' sounds – whisper it – kind of like a pop classic with its hammering drum breaks and head-rushing synths.

And yes, it is *that* Mark Ronson. Trumpets, The Rumble Strips and that cover of Radiohead's 'Just' Mark Ronson.

Still, rewind to before horn-heavy covers album 'Version' started flying out of Tescos and the Brit-born/New York-based producer became 'the enemy to decent music'. Should it *really* be a surprise that the man who recruited Ghostface Killah and Jack White for his 2003 solo debut 'Here Comes The Fuzz' has some decent tunes of his own?

Attempting to stake a claim that he does, Mark cues up 'The Bike Song', which boasts The View's Kyle Falconer crooning out an impossibly giant chorus while Spank Rock supplies the rhymes. On this evidence, it seems that after 'Record Collection''s release, Mark might just have a chance of shedding his be-suited bogeyman mantle.

"'Version' was a weird thing that took on a life of its own," he admits. "It was just me enjoying a different approach to songs I liked, whereas this is me rolling up the sleeves, writing 13 great songs."

The impressive cast list of the album, released under the moniker Mark Ronson & The Business, suggests this is no supermarket basket filler.

"I didn't come up with the idea of calling it 'Record Collection' until later, but every person on it is in my collection," he says of collaborators that include Boy George, The Drums' Jonathan Pearce, former Dirty Pretty Things guitarist Anthony Rossomando, Kaiser Chiefs' Nick Hodgson, Miike Snow and Rose Elinor Dougall ("I wasn't keen to just go and sing a cover," Rose, who sang on 'You Gave Me Nothing', which may make the final cut, tells us. "But I was always aware Mark wanted to do something completely different to before").

The album also sees Mark team up again with the man behind his most successful song to date – 'Valerie' creator Dave McCabe of The Zutons, who co-wrote 'The Bike Song'.

"As he wrote the biggest song on my last record I thought, 'Why not bring him out to New York?'" says Ronson. "We had a few nights out – I met *the* Valerie with him! I felt like giving her everything I had on me (*mimes taking out wallet*), just, 'Thank you!'"

The Details

Title: 'Record Collection'
Recorded: Dunham in Brooklyn/ Metropolis Studios in London
Songs: 'Bang Bang Bang' (single, out July 12), 'Cruel World', 'The Bike Song', 'Somebody To Love Me'
Release date: September

EMILIE BAILEY

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Speed Dial
DAMON ALBARN

The frontman chats Gorillaz' live show, releasing seven-inch singles and a new Blur album. Yes, A NEW BLUR ALBUM!



ANDY WILLSHER

You made us think Blur were finished, then you released 'Fool's Day' for Record Store Day. What happened?

Damon Albarn: "It was nice to know it made a difference. I heard Rough Trade in Brick Lane usually makes £6,000 on a Saturday and it made £60,000 on that Saturday. That's why I thought I'd take a big risk and go back in the studio, but it was great."

Having taken a risk, how do you feel about Blur now?
"I'm definitely going to do a few more of those seven-inches and at some point in the undetermined future there will be a record at the end of it. I love the no-pressure aspect. Just going in the studio and recording it in a day is something we haven't done since the B-sides in the early days. We can't do it all the time, so I don't want anyone to think there's an album coming soon, it's not possible – but we've got songs!"

After the Gorillaz' live gigs, there's a world tour. How does it feel playing those songs onstage rather than using holograms or being behind a screen?
"We did the holograms at the Grammys, but you can't do them live because you can't have any volume, the bass vibrates and the image disperses. There's some cutting-edge technology that, fingers crossed, by the time we reach that tour in the autumn we might be able to utilise to have the characters onstage next to the musicians, which will be amazing."

Does seeing the audience help?
"We can't really deviate. It's like [BBC Radio 4 comedy] *Just A Minute*: 'No deviations, hesitations or repetition'. Well, there's a bit of repetition, it's pop music (*laughs*). But there's room for a small amount of magic. It's very disciplined, but for an audience that's irrelevant. They don't care about technical aspects. It's whether it's working."

Now you've played several shows, how are all the guest musicians finding it? Is everyone happy to share the spotlight?
"Everyone is tuned into it. Everyone is on the same vibration. There's a lot of spiritually minded people involved in it now. Bobby [Womack], Mos [Def], that's very much how they work, so it's moved on to a new level. You know *The Last Waltz* [Martin Scorsese's 1978 documentary about The Band's last tour] – all those bands together? It's a bit like that. Especially when we start touring the world in the autumn."

Who Is Murdoc?

Gorillaz' cartoon frontman Tweets away and has appeared on NME Radio – but is it actually Damon pretending to be the character? "Murdoc is one of us, everything is written by one of us," explains Damon, "but [the person] should remain nameless. It's not me though! I have not the time or inclination to live inside someone's else's head." That's a 'no', then...

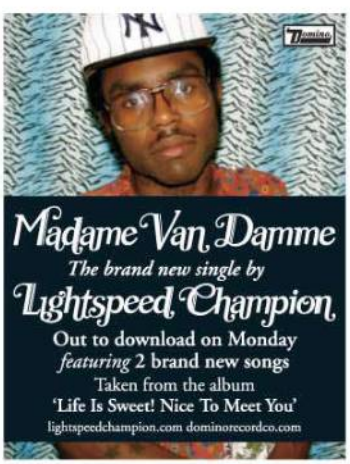
In the Blur film *No Distance Left To Run* you admitted that it took you a long time to realise that music wasn't a competition. Is Gorillaz the embodiment of that?
"In many ways it is. You can't worry about who is getting the most attention, it's not like that. It's weird, it has none of those connotations. We don't really know what we're doing, but I don't think we're totally making it up as we're going along. You have to focus on the fact that it's a very fast-paced, crazy event."

With the world tour, it's been hinted that you'll be playing 'Plastic Beach' in full...
"We were advised against playing 'Plastic Beach' at Coachella, but it went as well, if not better, than everything else. That audience felt like our audience."

Finally, with the Gorillaz tour, the opera you and Jamie Hewlett are working on and now more Blur singles, how do you fit it all in? When do you sleep?
"(*laughs*) When everyone else sleeps. It's just good time-management."



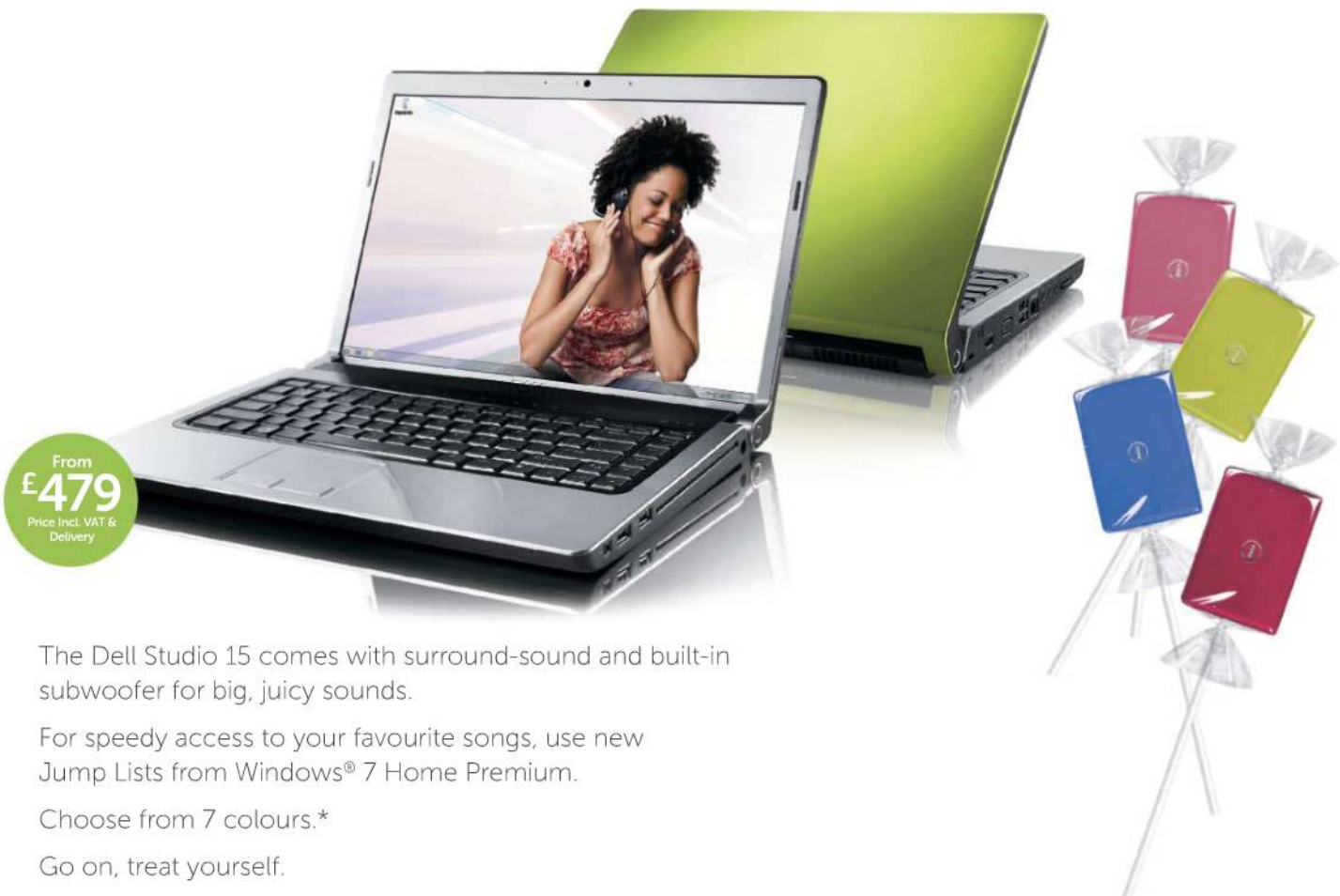




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TALKING HEADS

LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIPS: THE NEW ROCK'N'ROLL

With Trent Reznor, Jack White and more making ace tunes with partners, ***Mark Beaumont*** *reckons in 2010 music is finally giving monogamy a good name*



Aside from "Of course I don't want a pre-nup darling, it's hardly like you're going to run off anywhere with only one leg," it used to be that the very worst thing a rock star could whisper across the pillow to their partner was, "Y'know, for a supermodel/A-list actor/Radio 1 DJ/ obsessive fan of mine, you really can *sing*!" Couples in bands have, historically, been a recipe for musical or marital disaster: Sonny & Cher went from 'I Got You Babe' to 'You've Had Several Other People, Babe' inside 10 years, both Abba marriages were forced so far apart by the pressures of success it's taken 30 years for them to even talk about reforming, and Fleetwood Mac turned into a one-band *Jeremy Kyle Show* while recording 'Rumours'. And let's not even *think* about the Kate'n'Pete on-disc farragos. Those were reason enough for every court in the country to rule for enforced sterilisation right there.

So I was initially horrified to hear last week that howling industro-metal scaremonger Trent Reznor from Nine Inch Nails had started a band with his wife, Mariqueen Maandig. I know! Trent 'I'd rather die than give you control' Reznor has a *wife*! But, most shocking of all, How To Destroy Angels are actually pretty good. Subtle in a Portishead-y sort of way and with Trent's mechanical menace kept seething at a safe distance, it's almost as if Mariqueen has tamed him for the mainstream – the industrial equivalent of sobering up, pulling on an ill-fitting suit and trying not to twitch too much through parents' evening.

Sonny & Cher went from 'I Got You Babe' to 'You've Had Several Other People'

But HTDA aren't alone. Jack White's collaboration with wife Karen Elson has turned in some surprisingly compelling murder ballads and is arguably the best supermodel record since Grace Jones' 'Pull Up To The Bumper' (mind you, she is really only up against Naomi Campbell's execrable 1995 flop 'Baby Woman'). There's a monster buzz building around Jeremy Warmsley and partner Elizabeth Sankey's joint venture Summer Camp after they stole the Camden Crawl with their saccharine wobble-synth pillow talk. And with The Joy Formidable, Wildbirds & Peacedrums and The Besnard Lakes all finding that the whole 'rock relationship' thing can produce some remarkable sweet nothings, it looks like we've finally put behind us the days when 'getting the other half in' meant Linda McCartney playing one note on a keyboard at the back or Yoko Ono fucking up Side Four of 'The White Album'.

In my opinion, it's all down to one inspirational pairing, though. The returning Win and Regine from Arcade Fire finally laid to rest the spectres of Phil'n'Ronnie, Jack'n'Meg and George'n'Andrew and proved that the couple who play together really can stay together. And make beautiful music (outside the bedroom as well as in) while they're at it. Although, if the current divorce statistics are to be believed, expect a plethora of bile-driven break-up records called 'You'll Never Get Custody Of The Accordian, You Bastard' around 2015.

TALKING HEADS

KELLY JONES WAS WRONG TO FLIP OVER HIS FLIP-FLOP

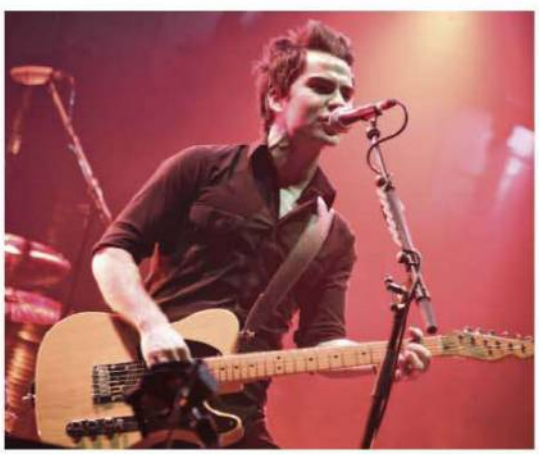
Stereophonics stormed offstage after their singer was hit by a flip-flop. Pulled Apart By Horses' missile magnet ***Tom Hudson*** *explains how you* should *react*



After I heard about Kelly Jones getting hit by a flip-flop thrown from the crowd in Singapore last month (April 30), I was thinking, 'Have we ever had stuff thrown at us?' Yeah, we have. Loads. It happens all the time. Probably the best thing we've been hit with was at Download, where somebody threw a giant Chupa Chup lolly with about 30 different Chupa Chups inside it. It was massive – about two feet wide, and it hit me. I just waved it in the air like a baton and then cracked it open when we got backstage and ate loads of lollipops the next day.

I pissed myself laughing when I heard about Stereophonics' ordeal. I mean, it is amazing, isn't it? Throwing a flip-flop. I think Kelly Jones is being a bit of a wuss. If someone chucked a Doc Martin or one of Elton John's stilettos or something, maybe it would be understandable... but it's a flip-flop. He should have kept calm and carried on.

Fair enough, I can understand that the bigger a band gets the more difficult this sort of thing becomes, but it should still be the same wherever you play and whoever you are.



GETTY

When we toured with Biffy Clyro, I remember one gig where there was a guy at the front giving them stick because of the way their sound has changed over the years. This guy – who must have paid to see them – was shouting shit the whole way through the gig, and you could just see that it was really getting to Simon Neil. At the end I honestly thought he was going to walk up and beat the shit out of him, but instead he got his tour manager to get the guy out of the crowd and bring him backstage. He just had a chat to him, you know, like, 'What the hell are you doing? You've paid all this money to come and see us and then you act like that?' He dealt with it in such a cool way, and afterwards the guy was really apologetic to him. That was resolved in the best way possible, I think, and *they* didn't even walk off. Maybe Kelly could learn something here.

Aside from doing that, Kelly would have probably got a bit more credit if he'd taken off one of his own shoes and thrown it back into the crowd. I just hope he's recovered after his ordeal. Next time they play maybe he'll have a big pile of Clarks behind him ready to throw back.

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Pieces Of Me
RICHARD HAWLEY

Ancient maps, cartoons on steroids, his uncle and Long John Silver: all the things that keep the Sheffield singer-songwriter ticking








Clockwise from top left: Michael Caine in *Zulu*; Richard's uncle, Frank White; The King himself; evil genius baby Stewie Griffin of *Family Guy*; the bad-to-the-bone Long John Silver; The Velvet Undergound; Godlike Genius (and hero to Hawley) Paul Weller





My first album
'THE SUN SESSIONS' BY ELVIS PRESLEY

"My dad had all the 78s, and I think he was tired of me wearing them out, so he got me my own version. That Christmas, I also got a spoken-word album by Stanley Unwin – the guy who muddled up his words in an Edward Lear fashion and did the intros on the Small Faces' 'Ogden's Nut Gone Flake'."

My first gig
MY UNCLE. AT A PUB

"My uncle is Frank White – who, in the '60s, was one of the best blues guitarists Sheffield had ever seen. I must've been about eight or nine. He was playing swampy, psychedelic, Hendrix-tinged blues. All that raw, ragged psychedelia being played at extreme noise levels pretty much pinned me to the wall."

My favourite lyric
'PALE BLUE EYES' BY THE VELVET UNDERGROUND

"*The fact that you are married only proves you're my best friend*". It's about adultery, and it's always struck a chord; not because I'm an adulterer but because it's such a clever expression of a complicated emotion."

Favourite artist
THOMAS ALLEN

"He's from Minnesota and he takes two-dimensional cut-outs from the covers of old pulp fiction then photographs them in 3D, by skilfully placing these bits of paper to fool the eye, so that the characters come to life."

The book that changed me
***VISIONS OF THE WORLD* BY JEREMY BLACK**

"It's a collection of old maps and a history of cartography. I'm a bit of a fan of maps. I like those ancient maps most of all – the idea that you'd map the terrain you knew, then at the edges just pencil in 'here be dragons'."

Favourite TV show
FAMILY GUY

Sometimes I'll come down to the living room late at night and sit there with a guitar on my lap, writing songs, and put the TV on, as a kind of distraction. *Family Guy* is a great thing to watch in that context. It's got a very high joke rate. I particularly enjoyed the episode where Stewie takes steroids."

Favourite film
ZULU

"The power of it was firstly what happens when empire goes wrong and secondly that, if they stick together, a bunch of guys with spears can go head to head with the world's strongest army."

Favourite fictional character
LONG JOHN SILVER

"He's bad to the bone, obviously, but he's also more subtly shaded in Robert Louis Stevenson's book than in the Hollywood version. In the book, he helps out Jim then rows away with his African mistress and just a small amount of treasure, so you retain a certain sympathy for him."

My hero
PAUL WELLER

"He's always stuck to his guns. Whether it's his refusal to reform The Jam, or pissing off to do The Style Council at the height of his fame, he's never had any desires beyond doing what he wants, when he wants."

ALLSTAR, GETTY, PHIL WALLIS

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VERSUS

Peter Robinson Vs BARRY HYDE

The Futureheads' singer on eating ants' eggs and his childhood discus prowess



FYI

- "One of our album tracks has 12 chords in it," notes Futurehead funnyman Barry. "That's all the chords!"
- If Barry were to enter *Britain's Got Talent* he would "play his face", using the cavity in his mouth as a musical instrument
- Oh dear

Hello, Barry. What is the most disgusting thing you've ever had in your mouth?
"I've eaten fish eyes. I've never had a cow's eye. I'm partial to fish head."

Now's not the time to discuss your private life.
"I also had a plate of ant eggs in Mexico. They were delicious. They eat a lot of insects in Mexico. I'm partial to eating insects, we should eat a lot more insects than we do."

It's funny how pallets develop, isn't it? For example it was realised at one point that kidney could be a pleasant meal, while colon was deemed less pleasant.
"It's all about putting stuff in your mouth! We do this from a very young age so that everyone knows what soil tastes like, everyone knows what trees taste like. When you're a toddler you're just obsessed with putting things in your gob."

As a child did you ever eat your own poo?
"NO. No. No!"

You would happily eat mud from the garden, but you knew not to eat 'home-made mud'.
"Nothing from the chutney chimney. That's a phrase invented by my wife!"

Your new album sounds quite good. What are your thoughts?
"Well, the thing with 'quite good' is that it's a double-edged sword. 'Good' is a good word, but if you put 'quite' in front of it, well, 'quite' means 'not really'. You're saying it's not really bad. It's 'OK'."

So I was listening to your album thinking, 'This is quite good, they're not going to be a joke any more' when all of a sudden I hear an 'homage' to 1980s comedy puppet act Keith Harris & Orville and their Top Five hit 'Orville's Song'. Please explain.
"A joke? We're light-hearted gentlemen! I sang that at the end of one song as a joke and we got a mix back and it sounded pretty good! And it is a little bit stupid but then so am I."

Does studio tension sometimes cross over into homoeroticism?
"Definitely. I find Ross [Millard, guitar and vocals] insatiable when we're doing harmonies and I find it pretty impossible not to straddle him as he's doing his low notes. We're not like rugby players though – that's the most homoerotic sport ever. I don't like sport, really, I prefer art to sport."



La-de-da.
"Exercise is a good thing but when it gets too territorial and masculine and ultimately encourages violence I don't like it. When you think about it, football is just a load of drunk people watching millionaires kick a ball around a field."

Gigs are just a load of drunk people watching a man having a sing. Or you go and see U2 and you've got millionaire Larry hitting things with sticks. Get him off! Buy a drum machine!
"I've changed my mind! FUCK MUSIC! I'm going to become a snooker player! At least then you get to wear a waistcoat. I love waistcoats. Let me tell you this, I was a champion discus-thrower at my school. I could tell all the hard lads were thinking 'no chance, that skinny bastard' then I KICKED THEIR ARSES. It was incredible. Then they kicked mine, which wasn't so good."

Do you feel that the idea of doing well, then not doing quite so well, is a good metaphor for your musical career?
"It depends what you mean by 'doing well'. You could say there was some correlation between that statement and our, er, interesting, decade-long career. There were some dark times, but it gets dark every fucking day! Happiness and sadness are basically the same thing."

Er...
"We're just happy to be here."

THIS WEEK'S TOP 20*

THE NME CHART

1	NEW	PENDULUM	'WATERCOLOUR'	Warner Bros
2	1	PLAN B	'SHE SAID'	679/Atlantic
3	2	TINIE TEMPAH	'PASS OUT'	Parlophone
4	3	FLORENCE + THE MACHINE	'DOG DAYS ARE OVER'	Island
5	NEW	FOALS	'THIS ORIENT'	Warner Bros
6	4	KATE NASH	'DO-WAH-DOO'	Fiction
7	9	RUSKO	'WOO BOOST'	Cooperative Music/V2
8	6	PAUL WELLER	'NO TEARS TO CRY/ WAKE UP THE NATION'	Island
9	7	THE XX	'CRYSTALISED'	Young Turks
10	8	MIA	'BORN FREE'	XL
11	12	DARWIN DEEZ	'RADAR DETECTOR'	Lucky Number
12	17	LAURA MARLING	'RAMBLING MAN'	Virgin
13	27	GORILLAZ	'SUPERFAST JELLYFISH'	Parlophone
14	13	CRYSTAL CASTLES	'CELESTICA'	Fiction
15	5	THE COURTEENERS	'TAKE OVER THE WORLD'	A&M
16	10	BAND OF HORSES	'COMPLIMENTS'	Columbia
17	18	AUDIO BULLYS	'ONLY MAN'	Cooking Vinyl
18	14	THE DRUMS	'BEST FRIEND'	Island/Moshi Moshi
19	16	VILLAGERS	'BECOMING A JACKAL'	Domino
20	32	LAURA MARLING	'DEVIL'S SPOKE'	Virgin

The NME Chart is compiled on a weekly basis from the sales of physical and digital singles through traditional high street retailers, internet retailers and digital music service providers. Singles are eligible for the NME Chart if they have featured on the playlists of NME Radio or TV, or in NME Magazine.

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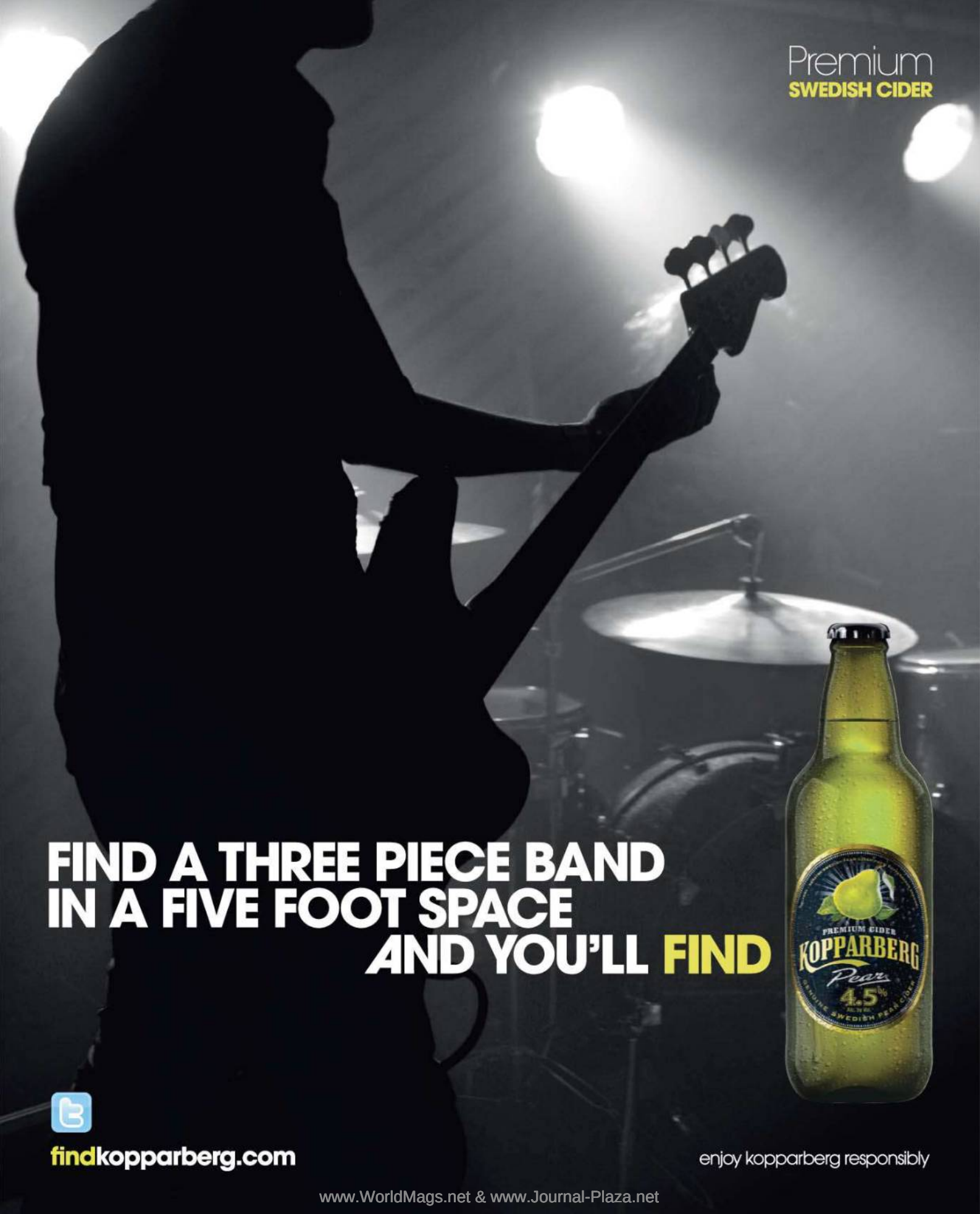
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NEW TO THE PLAYLIST
- THE DEAD WEATHER 'Blue Blood Blues'
- LCD SOUNDSYSTEM 'You Want A Hit'
- BEST COAST 'Far Away'
- DELOREAN 'Stay Close'
- HAPPY BIRTHDAY 'Girls'
- WE ARE SCIENTISTS 'Nice Guys'

*DUE TO COPY DEADLINES, THE NME CHART IS TAKEN FROM THE OCC'S OFFICIAL MIDWEEKS. HEAD TO NME.COM/BLOGS FOR THE LATEST TOP 40
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RADAR

FUTURE STARS, BREAKING SCENES, NEW SOUNDS...

Edited by Jaimie Hodgson



JEFF BAUMING

ABOUT TO BREAK

DIAMOND RINGS

The ex-jock anti-hero dolling up Toronto's plaid apocalypse

The party-stained carpets of this loft apartment – overlooking the leafy Roncesvalles neighbourhood of Toronto – are littered with records. Janet Jackson obscures Arthur Russell and Lou Barlow peers out from behind the gaudy sleeve of Culture Beat's 1993 Eurodance smash 'Mr Vain'.

The colours of the sleeves clash with the strewn pink and turquoise eye-shadow compacts, the ruby lipstick and the blusher pots, all of which John O'Regan will daub on to perform as Diamond Rings later this evening.

John gets dressed up pretty when he goes out, because he is *a fucking star*. And all the better a one for not having always known it; he was raised a "full-on jock" in a "small industrial town" called Oshawa. "They make cars there," John says. "My parents wanted me to work in the factory one summer... Chose a different path, I suppose."

Watch his video for 'Wait & See' and witness the birth of a real underground hero. Real because O'Regan, 24, is such an perplexing tower of contradiction that he can only be authentic. Scraping 7ft, he's built like a mechanic. But here he is covered in make-up, leading clunking choreographed dance routines in the middle of the street. Ever seen a man in nail varnish and zebra-print leggings slam-dunk mid-chorus?

Androgyny's easy for wet lads. John O'Regan moves and shrugs like the coyest girl at secondary school, but sings like Ian McCulloch. He's got *presence*. Ever get heckled, John? "It can be high-fives one minute, then idiots yelling 'Nice tights!' depending what block I'm on," he laughs. "It comes with the territory, doesn't it? I'm doing this to stand out."

Close your eyes and John's contradictions remain. 'Wait & See' is forged from post-punk guitars, but is intrinsically POP! Since moving to Toronto, he's avoided the "plaid-wearing, self-deprecating" hipsters deifying local bores such as Broken Social Scene. "I'm 'Diamond Rings' because I wanted it to be glam, fun, poppy, shiny – everything music from Toronto isn't," he smiles nervously. Joyfully self-aware, John O'Regan shines. But Diamond Rings is *the star*. ***Kev Kharas***

Need To Know

- John's keyboard is borrowed from his friend's mother
- 'Nasty Boys' by Janet Jackson is his favourite song of all time
- He's "handy with a saw" and recently built himself a new bed

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Warpaint: glossy

RADAR NEWS

RADAR GETS BACK IN THE MIX

Warpaint head up our new mixtape

1) **DIAMOND RINGS** 'Wait & See'
2) **WARPAINT** 'Elephants'
3) **UNTOLD** 'Stop What You're Doing (James Blake Remix)'
4) **GATEKEEPER** 'Mirrors'
5) **CULTS** 'The Curse'
6) **FUNERAL PARTY** 'NYCmovestothe soundofLA (Demo)'
7) **KISSES** 'Bermuda'
8) **RAMESSES** 'Khali Mist'
9) **TWIN SISTER** 'Lady Daydream'
10) **MNDR** 'Fade To Black'
11) **WALLS** 'Hang Four'
12) **WILD NOTHING** 'The Witching Hour'
13) **HOT CITY** 'Yeah!'
14) **LIGHT ASYLUM** 'Shallow Tears'
15) **CLASS ACTRESS** 'Journal Of Ardency (Lovers & Gamblers Remix)'
16) **DEVLIN** 'Bad Day'
17) **CASTROVALVA** 'Hooligans R Us'
18) **PURE ECSTASY** 'Voices'
19) **TEAM GHOST** 'Colors In Time'
20) **SUNDAY GIRL** 'Four Floors (Diplo Remix)'

Doesn't time fly when you're harassing all your favourite new artists to give you songs? We discovered that while preparing for you the next instalment of *Radar*'s mixtape series. Already we're starting to see the rapidly snowballing acclaim of the acts featured on 'Volume 2', with everyone from The Smith Westerns and JJ to Sleigh Bells and Ikonika sitting high up the list of most revered new artists going. This time around the standard's not letting up, as we continue to collate the very best of the *Radar*-featured names from the past four weeks. Highlights this time include Toronto-style indie-pap tension from Diamond Rings, James Blake's notorious Untold remix, Funeral Party's anthemic debut and the choral-psych from LA's Warpaint (pictured). As ever, it can be downloaded for one month only.

HEAD TO: *NME.COM/RADARMIXTAPE* to download your mixtape now

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DAN DENNISON, TOM OXLEY

Band Crush



Yanis Philippakis, Foals

"I saw this techno-pop duo called Sexy Sushi at the Bourges Festival in France recently and I was just transfixed. The singer sounded so pained, but her energy was mesmerising – the crowd was going insane."

Radar Glossary

This week's impenetrable muso slang decoded

SHIT-GAZE
Stifling discordance from the US 'rust-belt' backwaters. Imagine The Black Lips with limbs made of tin and microphones wrapped in burning tracing paper. See both Ohio's Times New Viking and Psychedelic Horseshit.

The Buzz

The rundown of artists, scenes, labels and remixes breaking forth from the underground this week



1 ALOE BLACC'S 'I NEED A DOLLAR'

It's easy to forget that hip-hop wasn't always a competition to see whose racing yacht had landed the best soft drink endorsement. Here, nerd-rap Mecca Stonesthrow continues its recent mainstream assault with the viralistic debut from Los Angeles soul boy Aloe Blacc. Like an adolescent Curtis Mayfield struck by a stifling case of the 'why are we heres?', the label's unmistakable taut underground rhythms are splayed with an outpouring of cyncism at the scene/world's obsession with the green stuff.



2 KISSES REMIXES

But a month ago Jesse Kivel was just the Colgate-grinning guitarist in swoonsome LA sunbeam-pop brigade Princeton. May '10: Jesse's also one of the most sought-after remixers around after his Erlend-Øye-In-A-Maroon-Crushed-Velvet-Smoking-Jacket debut 'Bermuda' crashed onto Blogland like a meteorite doused in Brut.



3 WE ARE THE WORLD

When *Radar* caught them live it was blown away by everything about WATW, except their tunes. They're doing stuff stylistically no other dance-pop troupe are venturing near. But things have now been toe-punted into overdrive for them since Gaga caught them live and tweeted their new video to single 'Clay Stones'. Have a gander.



4 SACRAMENTO'S TERROREYES.TV

After wearing out both Trash Talk and Ganglians' new albums on the *NME* stereo, *Radar* investigated the city's latest output. From the astral jitter-jams of 'What's Up' to the pensive geek-folk of Appetite, it seems it's kicking right off. *Terroreyes.tv* is a one-stop shop for all Sacs scene documentation.



5 POPICAL ISLAND

Adorable cottage industry alert! Dublin's Popical island is a night-cum-label with the mission statement of uniting the Irish capital's fragmented shmindie masses with a premise of being "like *Waterworld* meets *The Sound Of Music*'. Within its ranks are the crepe-paper-pop of The Yeh Deadlies and twee-folksters The Walpurgis Family.

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SCENE REPORT

BENEATH THE SHEEN

Popjustice/NME's Peter Robinson on the brightest future pop sounds



For those whose enthusiasm for recorded sound has not been decimated by new boyband Frixion – £5.99 'bobbling head' dolls are already available to purchase – the pop landscape has plenty to offer, not least from Norwegian pop band Donkeyboy. There's a touch of the Alphabeats about the five-piece and their first two singles hit Number One for weeks back home; the second, 'Sometimes', is like the warmest hug on a frosty spring morning.

If it's the next Lady Gaga you're after take some time to check out Natalia Kills – she's a new British pop queen signed to Gaga's forward-thinking US label Cherrytree (also the US home of Robyn and La Roux) and has been nurtured in the States by will.i.am. Teaser tracks such as 'Zombie' (available with mixes from Kleerup and Frankmusik) pave the way for balls-out pop barnstormers later in the year.

Another female solo act already signed to Geffen is enigmatic vocalist Jade Williams, who goes out under the name Sunday Girl. Her brilliant track 'Four Floors' appeared suddenly on iTunes at the start of the month, complete with the obligatory crap dubstep remix. There's also Florrie Arnold, a 21-year-old drummer (on, among other things, Girls Aloud's 'The Promise' – amazing) and now singer with an excellent taste in hats and an even better taste in collaborators – Fred Falke's done some exciting things with her songs 'Call 911' and 'Panic Attack'.

Finally, earlier this month former folk 'troubadour' Rod Thomas played his first live show as Bright Light Bright Light. It's proved a rather spectacular pop reinvention, like Bob Dylan going electric except more amazing and with better hair. 'Disco Moment' and 'Love Part II' are big hits in the making, and his remix of Kelis' 'Acapella' is great.

NEXT WEEK'S COLUMNIST:
Lee Spielman of Trash Talk

Peter's Top 5

1. **DONKEYBOY** 'Sometimes'
2. **NATALIA KILLS** 'Zombie'
3. **SUNDAY GIRL** 'Four Floors'
4. **FLORRIE ARNOLD** 'Call 911'
5. **BRIGHT LIGHT BRIGHT LIGHT** 'Disco Moment'

5 To See

This week's unmissable new music shows

WARPAINT
Forum, Tunbridge Wells Forum, May 13

CLASS ACTRESS / NATCCU
The Lexington, London, May 14

DUM DUM GIRLS
Sound Control, Manchester, May 14

OMAR SOULEYMAN/STILL FLYIN'
ATP Minehead, May 15

REAL ESTATE
Sacred Trinity Church Salford, May 17





MASAKO MIYAZAKI, LORNA ROACH

Donkeyboy: making changing rooms look good since 2009



PENGUIN PRISON

HOXTON BAR AND GRILL, LONDON

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 28

CAUGHT LIVE

Neon Gold? Sure, the boutique New York imprint releases a nifty seven-inch, but oh! The pressure! In case your browser has been on the blink for the past two years, Neon Gold have primed at least two thirds of cred-pop's Next Big Things (Passion Pit, Ellie, Marina, Wolf Gang, The Sound Of Arrows). Tonight the latest of their fold makes his English debut.

Born Chris Glover, Penguin Prison is the rebirth of white-boy crotch-grabbing in a career that has so far involved a stint in a boyband (Google 'Smartest People At Bard') and Alicia Keys' gospel choir (old school buds, ya see).

If there's a weight on his, erm, wings, it doesn't show. Cruising smoothly into 'A Funny Thing', time begins to peel away. We're suddenly in an ad for a '90s 'Swing' compilation. It's an oily, blissed-out, pseudo-slow jam. Imagine him from JLS dating Neneh Cherry. Glover's voice is super-pronounced, and – suiting his label's output – almost Anglophile in its intonation. 'Funky' still doesn't feel like a word to be idly tossed around, but as newie 'Don't Fuck With My Money' hits (think Lionel Richie in his prime, produced by Flight Of The Conchords) groove prejudice just isn't an option. The dancefloor mutters, confers among itself and then – out of nowhere – there's hands in the air! Like, well, they just don't care. Glover's a gliding pro, whose drain-piped loverman routine feels one of instinctive flamboyance. The sustained Marvin-esque mew as he vogues-out the closing bars of 'Animal Animal', is a syrup-dipped deal-sealer. Under pressure? Hardly. This one's in his man bag. ***Ailbhe Malone***

BREAKTHROUGH BAND OF THE WEEK

This week's best NME Breakthrough artist picked by New Music Editor Jaimie Hodgson



BABE SHADOW



WE SAY: Like Mystery Jets if 'the dad' had been replaced by Paul Simon
BAND MEMBERS: Tom Cawte, David Thornley, Mark Thorne, Sam Nadel
LOCATION: London
FORMED: Late 2009

RELEASES TO DATE: Self-titled EP, 2010
THREE MOST IMPORTANT ARTISTS: Joe Jackson, Iggy Pop and the Kinks
HAVE PLAYED WITH: Florence + The Machine
MOTTO: Run as fast as you can
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"THE NEW JUSTIN BIEBER VIDEO IS MORE OFFENSIVE THAN ANYTHING I'VE MADE..."



PHOTOGRAPHS TOM OXLEY

She's made a provocative new video but now refuses to talk about it. She's 'anti-consumerist' yet hangs out at the Grammys. Jaimie Hodgson confronts the many contradictions of MIA

Ikhyd Bronfman is being hoisted down London's City Road. To his right a lunchtime traffic jam, behind him an entourage of aunties and stylists. "It's his first trip to east London," notes his mother, Maya Arulpragasam, jolting Ikhyd up in her arms. "What do you make of it, son?" The baby twists his head around in his camouflage two-piece – perhaps forming a final opinion of the whole hullabaloo – then buries back into the folds of her jacket as if to take refuge. It's fitting he's keeping his head down. For both mother and son, it has been *quite a week*.

A short while later, Ikhyd is tearing around Jamie Oliver's 15 restaurant, clambering over furniture and making friends with waiters' legs. As his mum crumbles into the chair opposite *NME*, she looks too tired to think, let alone speak. Yet she's definitely not hiding away. It's been just over 48 hours since her return to the music scene was air-raid sirened into the world arena with a certain seven-minute promo. All of a sudden the letters M-I-A are more tightly woven into the fabric of Now than ever before.

As we're sure you'll know by now, the 'Born Free' video – directed by Maya's pal Romain Gavras (the man behind Justice's similarly controversial 2008 urban implosion 'Stress') – is a stunningly shot depiction of genocide, as seen by the executioners themselves. The graphic brutalities are centred around a group of adolescent red-haired kids being slaughtered on wasteland, presumably persecuted for the colour of their locks. The gratuitous shock-ride juxtaposes crack-smoking granddads and frolicking fatties with a coded commentary on the bleak undercurrent of war crimes. It's harrowing stuff.

Within hours of its release the video was banned from YouTube after breaking the internet channel's rules prohibiting content of "pornography or gratuitous violence". Scorn from *Newsweek* followed, branding it "turgid, political faux-meaningfulness". But it had its champions too. Alongside Gaga and Beyoncé's landmark 'Telephone' short, you might see 'Born Free"s video as asserting the return of music videos as a grand, focal art form.

Not that Maya wants to talk about such things...

"I did nine hours of phone interviews yesterday and all anyone wanted to know about was the meaning of the video," she sighs, her soft features peeking out from behind her Bloody Mary. "It completely baffles me that everyone seems to be obsessed with deciphering the meaning to it. It baffles me in the same way as the Brick Lane riot for American Apparel leggings baffled me." With her coy half-smiles and rolled eyes she flatly refuses to enter into the specifics of the video's conception. When we ask, she repeatedly mimes zipping up her mouth, making muffled sounds as she does. The argument that an artist has a responsibility to discuss such potentially upsetting work carries little cache with her.

"It's ridiculous that anyone would think the process should be: you make a video, you put it out, you talk about it, then you move on," she exclaims. "We don't know what the process is for this one yet. I haven't thought about it yet and I don't want to have to. But the fact that people are having all these conversations feels part of the whole process." She laughs. "If I'm honest, I find the new Justin Bieber video more violent and more of an assault to my eyes and senses than what I've made."

Gavras perhaps has an obsession with ginger persecution; his forthcoming feature film *Les Seigneurs* (or *Redheads*) charters the violent revenge of a bullied flame-haired one on a pilgrimage to "the land of the redheads" (that'll be Ireland). Yet the video also arrives not long after reports that Maya herself was being branded a "cheerleader for terrorists" by her fellow Sri Lankans, for statements she made as thousands of her native Tamils were being slaughtered in battles with government

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"I DON'T WANT TO BE TYPECAST AS THE ARTIST THAT MAKES MUSIC FULL OF ISSUES"

troops. How directly her new promo plays upon all this, and with what degree of sophistication, is still up for debate.

Maya mimes her mouth being zipped up again. Well, by everyone other than her, anyway.

Video or no video, the mood of expectation surrounding MIA's 2010 comeback far eclipses that of anything she's done before. Mainly because sometime during the early summer months of 2008, Maya haphazardly stumbled into megastardom, becoming the genuinely subversive pop star she'd always threatened to be.

Always one to put in the graft, perversely, you could put all this down to luck – Maya's rebirth began when 'Paper Planes', the Clash-sampling flop-of-a-third-single-from-'Kala', made its way onto an advert for Seth Rogan's 2008 stoner dude-com, *Pineapple Express*. Overnight the track's atoms were split. 'Paper Planes' quickly took on a life of its own. It became the most remixed hip-hop cut of the year, with everyone from 50 Cent to Lil Wayne jumping on it. It didn't stop there either; after licensing the tune, cult Indian composer AR Rahman invited her to collaborate with him on the soundtrack to *Slumdog Millionaire*, earning them both an Oscar nomination. Her stratospheric rise culminated with an image that she'll find hard to top in terms of memorability. Nine months pregnant, MIA graced the stage of the 51st Grammy Awards in a sensationally accentuating Henry Holland polka-dot mesh dress with TI, Jay-Z, Kanye West and Lil Wayne together acting as her backing band. From influential cult figure to one of the 100 most important living humans according to *Time* magazine – Ikhyd couldn't have picked a more surreal time to arrive.

"When I woke up in my hospital bed after I'd given birth there were four people standing over me on cellphones," she recalls. "One said, 'I've got the Oscars here and they need to know right now whether you're going to perform. If you're not they're going to get Gwen Stefani to sing your part. Can you give us the OK on that?' I was like, 'Why the fuck are you next to my bed? What the fuck is wrong with you?'"

That wasn't even the strangest part...

"In the end they decided against Gwen," she explains. "But I got a call the next day saying, 'The Oscars are willing to build you a hospital bed that flies, so they can fly you in your bed onto the stage to sing your part...'"

Maya now lives with Ikhyd and her other half, Ben, in Los Angeles' Westside. She's even bought another pad across the city in Silver Lake, to house a congregation of her British friends whom she imported to keep her company when an expired visa meant she couldn't leave the US. It's a far cry from the dank suburbia of her birthplace, Hounslow, or her residence during this trip, at her mum's in Tooting.

"I'm sleeping in a box room in a council house with my baby. I'm living out my parallel reality. What could have been, or what could still be," she smirks. "My mum's got a £30-pram that her church gave her. One of the wheels doesn't work. I feel bad doing this to Ikhyd, but I think it's good for him in the long run. My mum's just so ghetto. In LA he's got a state of the art, pimped-out thing with a body kit. It was a present from [Interscope label boss] Jimmy Iovine when he was born."

Not only is Maya's new-found fame and fortune a good old 'told you so' moment for the hordes of fans who have worn her letters like a crest since her 'Piracy Funds Terrorism Volume 1' mixtape in 2004, but her newly noble status has given her the opportunity to fulfil her own manifesto, to become a true 'anti-pop star', to implode 'the machine' from within. Not that this is without its problems...

When we track down Maya the following evening in Tooting – this time with her sister on babysitting duties – she suggests the lavish confines of the Connaught hotel in Mayfair. "It's a lot easier to be on the outside looking in, shouting 'Fuck you!' as people drive past in their Bentleys," she says, as we both clink our pair of £20 espresso martinis. "Once you're on the inside, there's a lot of pressure to just shut the fuck up and have a good time."

It really is an awkward juxtaposition. Despite this, Maya argues that the popscape needs her more than ever. "I feel there's even more artists coming through that are willing to do anything for fame. That's got worse," she notes. If her lifestyle has become cushier over the past 18 months, it's only served to stoke her fires. "The decision is this," she says. "Are you going to be one of those people that sells the myth that thousand-dollar frocks and red carpets equal success? Or are you going to be honest. Sell something that has flaws and asks questions."

NME tries pushing her to elaborate on her disparaging comments on Lady Gaga, made in *NME*'s relaunch issue Q&A three weeks ago, only to discover the topic has subsequently been added to her growing list of no-go subjects. We bicker for a while over parameters of the cancerous virus she calls 'robot pop', and whether Stefani Germanotta should deservedly be placed within them. In short: she says 'yes', "no matter how wisely she's invested her money in $10,000-a-day stylists". We offer a more forgiving viewpoint. "You'd better not make this piece about her," she warns us, cackling. "I'm rich enough to have you killed now, you know."

Jokes for sure, yet Maya does keep getting offered

STYLING BY CARRI MUNDANE HAIR AND MAKE-UP: NATALYA NAIR @ BALCONY JUMP USING MAC AND BUMBLE & BUMBLE

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Far left: a heavily pregnant MIA with her megastar mates Lil Wayne, TI, Jay-Z and Kanye at the Grammys; (above) the gingers get it in explosive style in the controv video for 'Born Free'; (below left) with partner Ben Brewer; (below right) up close and confrontational back in 2005

"FOR THE FIRST TIME I FEEL LIKE I'M TRULY FALLING IN LOVE WITH MUSIC"

the kind of reptilian golden handshakes that'd mean you'd never have to think about lifting a (webbed) finger ever again.

"They wanted me to be the face of Coca-Cola," she sighs. "I was like, 'Wow. Have you guys got any idea what you're talking about?'" But as seems to be the way with Maya, just when you think things are beyond insane, you realise the punchline's yet to come. "Then Pepsi called me the next week!" she continues. "They were hounding me from every angle. Even my mother-in-law got an email from them. She called me and said, 'Oh my god, Maya (*in her best croaky NYC-Jew impression*) they're offering you *so* much money."

An 'anti-consumerist' pop star, who sells records about the pros of pirating music; as we said, MIA's no stranger to contradictions. But this latest chapter appears to have taken her conflicting curmudgeon of ideals to a whole new level. Consider this: Ikhyd's dad is Ben Brewer, failed rock musician and son to Edgar Miles Bronfman Jr, CEO of Warner Music Group. A multi-multi-billionaire and one of music piracy's most outspoken opponents, Bronfman once compared Napster to slavery and Soviet communism. The irony of bedding down in the lair of the monster she claims to want to slay isn't lost on her.

"Sometimes I feel like maybe I should just combust and die," she says, looking skyward. "My baby is going to have this moment one day where it stares in the mirror and goes, 'God, what do I choose? My crazy mom or my crazy dad?' He's going to have to make that decision." It feels pointless labouring the glaring contradictions in her ideology and home life when met by such wide-eyed defence. "The contradiction is interesting, but maybe it doesn't have to be like that. Maybe I could be the bridge between those two societies. Maybe I'm a bridge rather than a disease for that side or a hero for the other side. I know that's super-optimistic." It's this air of blind naivety that seems to underpin Maya, rather than MIA. As quick as facts, figures, bile and conspiracy can ricochet from her mouth when in 'the zone', she can melt into a pool of shrugging question marks.

Another thing not worth questioning is that MIA has undoubtedly gone and made her most challenging album to-date; 'Born Free' is a telling precursor. At the time of press still nameless, rumours were circulating that her third album could end up being her eponymous effort. That would make sense; as following her debut and follow-up, respectively named after her father and mother, the latest record sees her attentions coming full-circle and ending up at her own front door – in the midst of the emotional extremities brought about by motherhood and her homeland's bloody conflict.

"I saw firsthand where the music we made ended up," she recounts of the booty music she and long-time collaborators Diplo & Switch popularised on her albums. "It turned up in sterile bullshit clubs in LA, separated from the spirit we made it in." Duly, she insists the new record "isn't a party record", which is strange, having being half-helmed by her old pair of dancefloor dictators, and then half by a new recruit – the 'party-boy' of UK dubstep, Rusko.

Yet we can report that the pulse-like throb of 'Kala' is no more. It's no longer groove-centric. It erupts from blinding gabba BPMs and devil-horned guitars on 'Meds And Feds', her collaboration with Sleigh Bells' Derek Miller, to quagmires of sub-bass on 'Story Told', her and Rusko's first joint effort. Then, when it's not in fits of frantic lunacy, it's bobbing in a sea of ethereality, like on the web-leaked 'Space Odyssey', her gently mewed singing debut. Her bond with Rusko was instigated, she says, after dissatisfaction grew with her now-overworked cohorts cajoling her for hits.

"I started to feel like I was getting offered songs that were just *fodder*," she confesses. "They're making a hundred tunes a day for all these pop stars now. Those guys are like, '(*She holds an imaginary mobile to her ear*) Yeah, yeah, yeah, I got beats all day, maaan. Hey, Christina, sure. Oh yeah, MIA? Whatever'. I'm like, fuck all that shit. I don't want to make anything cool. I just wanted to sum up how I feel."

Whatever anyone says about MIA's return, she cannot be accused of diluting what she does. Whatever is going on in her personal life, she's finally been given the platform she's always dreamed of having and she's launched herself from it, two-footed. Whatever you make of the final product, she's making 'art' that's more impassioned and provocative than ever before. Whatever you make of her decrees, she's more politically outspoken than ever before too. But don't those contradictions eat away at her?

"Kanye called me up while he was recording Jay-Z's album," she recounts, "and he was like, 'Yo, I heard you were, like, stupid rich now. You should be making yacht-rock right now.'" Unsurprisingly there don't look to be that many nautical grooves on the horizon. "But I don't want to be typecast as the artist that makes music full of *issues*," she says. But Maya, that's what you have done, we retort. Then she says this: "I feel like I'm a fucking infomercial for issues around the world this year. I don't want it to be like that though. I feel like for the first time I'm truly falling in love with music in its own right." Considering the fact she's released each album so far by handing in her resignation shortly after their release, this can only be a step in the right direction. At last she seems to be openly seizing her music as her 'calling', rather than a temporary dalliance.

Not that she *can* stop talking about the issues...

"I think I have a chemical imbalance that means I'm affected by more stuff than most," she ponders. "I'm maybe another species or something. So talking about that is the easy bit." She pauses. "The hard bit is working out what this next bit is."

She laughs, finishes her cocktail.

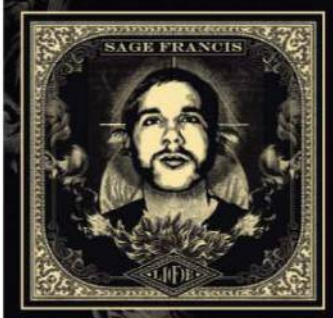
"Don't worry, I'm not going to become a suicide bomber and fly into Chase Tower," she smiles. "That'd be aiming low. It'd be the Federal Reserve bank."

Like anything concerned with Maya Arulpragasam, the next bit certainly doesn't seem like it's going to be boring.

Go behind the scenes at MIA's cover shoot, plus see the 'Born Free' video again at *NME.COM*

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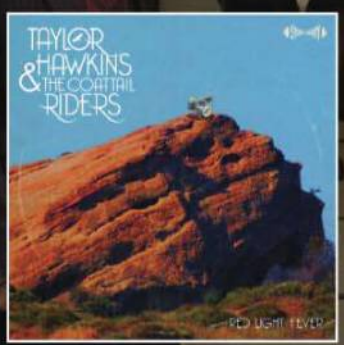


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NME ICONS

PAVEMENT



The 'classic' Pavement line-up (l-r): Bob Nastanovich, Scott 'Spiral Stairs' Kannberg, Steve West, Mark Ibold, Steve Malkmus

***Pavement** imploded before fulfilling their billing as the "new Nirvana" back in the '90s, but their influence still hovers over indie rock.* **Matt Wilkinson** *welcomes back the sometimes baffling, constantly frustrating heroes of* NME

Reformations rarely come without a collective raised eyebrow, but when Pavement announced theirs last September it felt like the entire world should stop and take notice.

Here was a band frequently adored by the party faithful, yet increasingly left off a US musical lineage that seemed to skip from REM to Pixies to Nirvana to, well, The Strokes. That lineage *was* wrong, because the simple truth is that between 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' going global and 'Is This It' screaming primeval, there really was only one US band worth caring about. Their fans knew it, their musical heirs such as Blur and Deerhunter's Bradford Cox blatantly knew it, and fuck, even Pavement probably knew it themselves. They *deserved* widespread recognition, even if they never bothered chasing it.

Now, with this week's O2 Academy Brixton shows and their own ATP weekender finally arriving, it actually seems like they're about to get it.

It might only be 8am, but Pavement guitarist Scott 'Spiral Stairs' Kannberg is up for reminiscing. Speaking from his San Francisco hotel room, he talks fondly of his time in Pavement – from the first rehearsal since reuniting ("It was nervous, weird... but what a relief") right back to the band's earliest days, "fooling around in Steve Malkmus' parents' house, just making up songs as we went along".

By that point, in the late '80s, Malkmus had already tasted life onstage as a guitarist with several going-nowhere bands, including The Straw Dogs, who were based in his and Kannberg's hometown of Stockton, California. But Kannberg would have to wait a few years before really getting to grips with his buddy's emerging talent as a genius songwriter, as Malkmus took time out to study history – 2,700 miles away at the University Of Virginia. There, he met keen Scrabble enthusiast plus future full-time gambler and Pavement percussionist Bob Nastanovich. When he returned to Stockton and promptly did regroup with Kannberg, the duo finally set about recording something properly. To do so, they roped in a local drummer who had a home studio and was 13 years their senior: Gary Young.

Three facts – almost certainly true – about Young: 1) He used to hand out buttered toast/tiddlywinks/cabbage to audience members during shows. 2) He was a raging alcoholic who spent most gigs running around the stage and doing handstands instead of drumming, and was nicknamed the Rotting Man by the band on account of his booze-infused breath. 3) In 1992 he made

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out with Courtney Love backstage at a Sonic Youth gig while her then hubby, one Kurt Cobain, opened up with an acoustic slot a few metres away, completely unaware. Upon returning to his understandably apprehensive bandmates – who'd witnessed the whole thing – Young is said to have muttered the immortal words: "Who the fuck is this Courtney Long?"

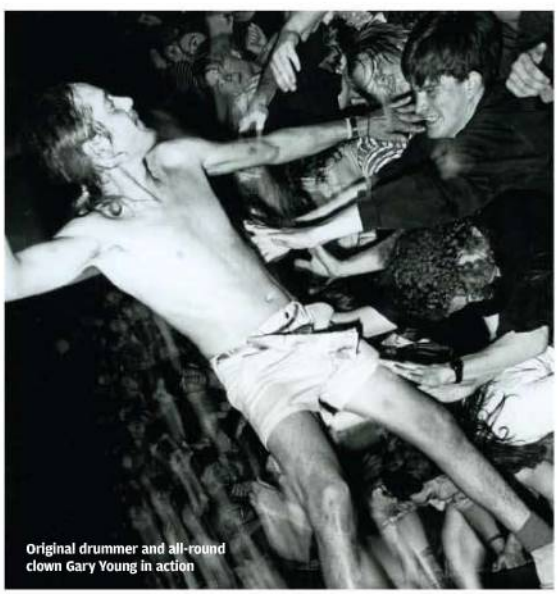
Nevertheless, the band somehow managed to record some of their best material ever with him, including their debut EP 'Slay Tracks' and classic debut album 'Slanted And Enchanted', which came out officially in 1992 after doing the rounds on illicit cassette for a year before that.

The album ushered in a seismic shift in the Pavement story. Before it, they were a magnificent but unconventional mess, hardly ever playing live and still working day jobs. After, they were forced to become a proper band, do press, do tours... even enlist a bass player (enter New York bassist/early Pavement fan Mark Ibold). "It was a genuine shock to us – we didn't want to be ambitious, or this big rock band," says Kannberg of their sudden success. With the rigmarole that goes hand-in-hand with stepping up to the musical conveyor belt, the band soon began to wilt under the weight of Young's eccentricities. By the end of 1993, he'd been forced to quit, with Kannberg now admitting, "Gary was just out of control" and "I think as a band we were just tired of it. We couldn't function anymore, and if we wanted to go on and do anything else, then we had to change."

With a new drummer – Steve West, who knew Malkmus from his Virginia days – and renewed purpose, the band duly cleaned up their act and set about rehashing their sound, with Malkmus admitting at the tail end of 1992 that he'd "be happy to let [the 'Slanted And Enchanted'] songs go".

Which, funnily enough, is exactly what he did on second album 'Crooked Rain Crooked Rain'. That record, an indie-pop classic, substituted Pavement's early lo-fi brilliance for a clean, intricately produced sound collage. Upon its release in 1994, it also took the band to the edge of the bigtime – a position they'd reside in uneasily but consistently for the rest of their '90s career. Though it failed to make them the 'new Nirvana', as many had predicted, the album did include their biggest US hit, 'Cut Your Hair' – ironic, seeing as that song was actually a thinly-veiled attack on sell-outs. "People initially went mad when we did 'Crooked Rain...'," Kannberg remembers of the album's reception. "They just thought Pavement was about 'Slanted And Enchanted'. But if you have any kind of love of music, you don't make the same record over and over. Which I don't think we ever did."

He's right. The band again changed their tack almost straight away, producing two equally contrasting albums that still managed to build on their existing fanbase. The sprawling 'Wowee Zowee' (1995) did mark something of a return to the more DIY nature of 'Slanted And Enchanted', but it was way more eclectic and wide ranging in style, lyrics and sonic palette than the debut. Malkmus, speaking after its release, hailed it as "almost like a resume. One song I was a dishwasher, then I was a security guard. It was a bit like trying to get out of your skin."



Original drummer and all-round clown Gary Young in action

"IF YOU HAVE ANY LOVE OF MUSIC, YOU DON'T MAKE THE SAME RECORD OVER AND OVER. WHICH I DON'T THINK WE EVER DID"

SCOTT KANNBERG

Remarkably, considering their popularity, the band were still without management at this point. Kannberg took on that duty, and, perhaps inadvisably, the band opted to play a Main Stage slot at Lollapalooza that year. It was a disastrous decision, due to the early-afternoon time slot that saw them playing to audiences who'd hardly heard of them – and couldn't care less for *their* couldn't-care-less attitude. Demoralised, the band decided that the best thing to do was fight fire with fire. So, they did away with setlists, jammed aimlessly onstage and constantly ripped the piss out of the lackadaisical crowds.

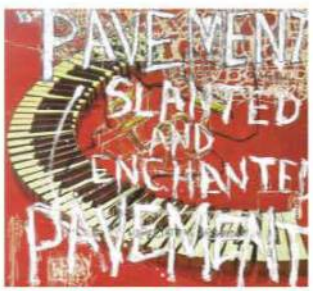
"The only reason we did it was because it was a good line-up!" Kannberg reasons. "It had Sonic Youth and Beck and Jesus Lizard. So it wasn't a complete waste. It wasn't like we were playing Glastonbury with all these terrible bands."

Things came to a head at a date in West Virginia, when they were pelted with mud and rocks by a hostile crowd. "Pavement weren't the sort of band who had any sort of ambition to win over a Lollapalooza audience," mused Sonic Youth's Thurston Moore correctly afterwards.

"For us, at that time it didn't feel like anything special really," Kannberg says of the period, with a tinge of sadness escalating. "I mean, it was the biggest tour we'd ever done but we played early in the day to nobody. It was just a complete bummer for all of us."

Bruised, stoned but not down'n'out, the band

THE GOLD SOUNDZ OF PAVEMENT



SLANTED AND ENCHANTED (1992)
Lo-fi's Year Zero may sound like it was recorded in a broom-cupboard under the sea, but that hardly matters when the songs are as good as these. 'Summer Babe', 'Perfume-V', 'Trigger Cut'... lackadaisical vocals, fuzzed-up guitars and unhinged percussion have never again combined so perfectly. *"I was dressed for success/but success it never comes"* sang Malkmus on the gorgeous 'Here', but what did he know? A classic debut.



CROOKED RAIN CROOKED RAIN (1994)
With the grunge gold-rush in full swing, the band took the willfully perverse decision to make a countrified concept album of sorts attacking the very system that could have made them stars if they'd played ball. *"Songs mean a lot, when songs are bought/and so are you"* rages Malkmus on the closest they came to a hit, 'Cut Your Hair', but the spite is always tempered with lashings of dark humour. Their best album, and that's saying something.



WOWEE ZOWEE (1995)
After the focused songcraft of 'CR CR', the obvious thing would've been to build on that album's success. Instead they recorded a sprawling 18-track effort taking in messy punk ('Brinx Job'), pedal-steel country ('Father To A Sister Of Thought') and psych-rock jams ('Half A Canyon'). It may lack the honed perfection of their preceding effort, but there's still a stack of great songs here, and Malkmus' obtuse lyrics were by now approaching genius.



BRIGHTEN THE CORNERS (1997)
If you could accuse the band's fourth album of being Pavement-by-numbers, those numbers were damn clever and exciting ones; 999 maybe, or 5-4-3-2-1. In 'Shady Lane' and 'Stereo' (*"What about the voice of Geddy Lee/How did it get so high?/I wonder if he speaks like an ordinary guy"*) they wrote two of their catchiest singles, while Malkmus' twisting words had by now reached their zenith. Seriously, English lit classes should study this album.



TERROR TWILIGHT (1999)
And so Pavement's career ended as it started: messily, haphazardly, all over the place. The difference now was that it was the group which was unfocused rather than Nigel Godrich's ultra-clean production. The intra-band tensions of the album sessions are evident in its quality, which is patchy, although it does still throw up gems such as 'Major Leagues'. It's basically a Malkmus solo album though, and as such lacks the unhinged charm of its predecessors.

ADDITIONAL WORDS: MARC MCLAREN

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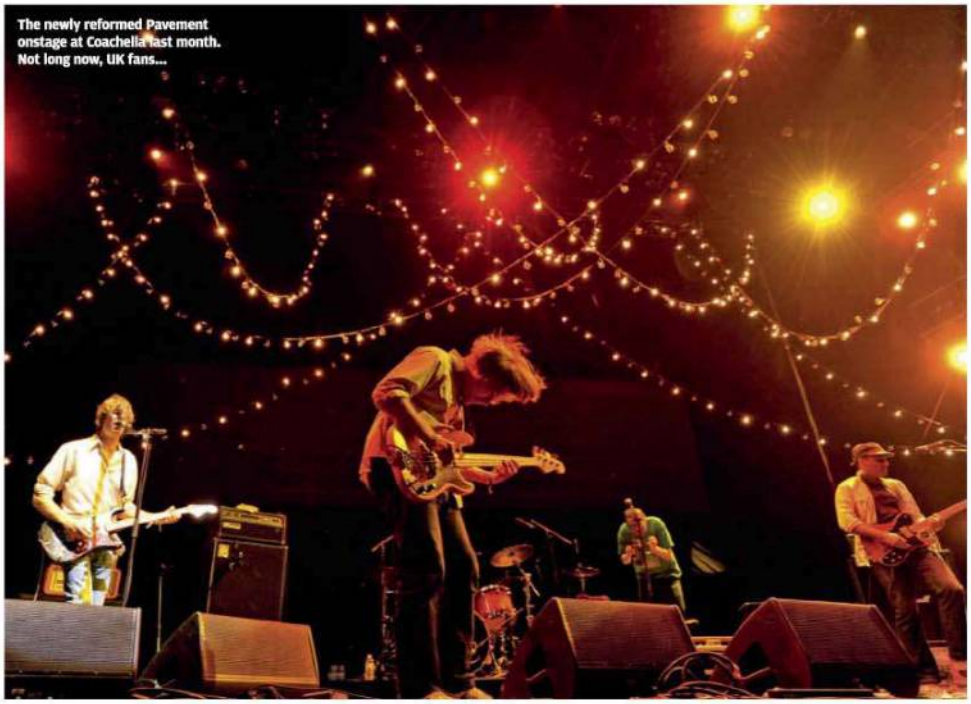
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The newly reformed Pavement onstage at Coachella last month. Not long now, UK fans...

returned to the studio, coming up with the goods once again on 1997's 'Brighten The Corners'. A "more comfortable and natural" record according to Malkmus, it also largely did away with the weirdness offered up by the weed-infused 'Wowee Zowee'. By this point, the frontman had also struck up an unlikely friendship with Damon Albarn and his then girlfriend Justine Frischmann of Elastica, which Albarn played out gleefully in front of the UK music press. It briefly made Malkmus something of a bizarre tabloid fixture, though he consistently played down the union, even to the point of comparing Albarn to "a young boy" and Blur "like Pavement if we were 10 times worse". In response, a red-faced Albarn was left to exclaim: "Whenever I'm with him we get on well, but he's cagey about admitting that in the press."

Along with the fact Malkmus had also started playing solo shows, what quickly became obvious to fans around this time was that there seemed to be an ever-widening bridge between him and the rest of the band – even though they did reconvene in the summer of 1998 to record what would become their final album, 'Terror Twilight' (released in 1999). This time, Radiohead producer Nigel Godrich helmed the sessions. "He basically saved that record from obscurity," notes Kannberg, none of whom's songs were included on the album, making it essentially a Malkmus solo offering.

"WE'VE GOT A BIG PAIR OF HANDCUFFS READY FOR STEVE IF HE WANTS THEM!"
SCOTT KANNBERG

"It was a hard record to make," Kannberg adds, coyly. "Afterwards we went and played all the same places we were playing before. I think that kind of bummed Malkmus out a bit. He didn't really wanna do it any more like that. It was a hard record to make, and then hard tour to do."

By the time said tour reached London's Brixton Academy, on November 20, 1999, they'd all had enough. Malkmus took to the stage and had his 'Pistols in Winterland' moment, dangling a pair of handcuffs over his mic stand and allegedly declaring, "These symbolise what it's like being in a band all these years." Pavement then put a stop to their career by playing 'Here' from 'Slanted And Enchanted', the final lyrics of which state – heartbreakingly – that the "*last time is the best time*". With that, and a miss-if-you-blink salute to the crowd, they were gone.

Two weeks later, a spokesperson for Domino released the following brilliantly crafted statement to *NME*: "Pavement are retiring for the foreseeable future to: 1) Start families, 2) Sail around the world, 3) Get into the computer industry, 4) Dance, 5) Get some attention."

Cue: an entire decade of a world without a band called Pavement in existence.

Now though, of course, they're back.

"We've got a big pair of handcuffs ready for Steve if he wants them... we're gonna sell them as memorabilia!" laughs Kannberg about the London gigs. They're gonna be a massive celebration, he says, because "it's kind of ironic – being the place of the last show". Besides that, the reunion had always been on the cards, according to the guitarist. "It just wasn't meant to take as long as this. I missed the guys. I missed everything. It was a fun time. We were in it together and it was like we were The Monkees. It's been totally emotional playing these gigs."

But what this tour isn't, Kannberg says, is the dawn of a new chapter for Pavement.

"Will there be new material? I don't think so. It's nice that we've got it for this year, a little snapshot of what it used to be. But I don't think Pavement needs to go into the future. We need to just be what we were and let it live."

Yet maybe, just maybe – considering how well the tour seems to have gone – it might be worth buying a few pairs of those fabled handcuffs and tracking down the five genius misfits onstage. Then you can bind them together once and for all.

NME ICONS

NME Icons is a new monthly series celebrating artists and moments that have helped define and shape our musical world. Throughout May there will be special features about our first Icons Pavement on *NME.COM*, NME Radio and *NME* – including gig reports, photo galleries and new interviews. And there'll be lots more to be announced throughout the month...

Let us know who you think should be honoured as a future NME Icon by emailing *nmeicons@nme.com*

PHOTOS: GETTY, LFI, TIM PATON



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WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT AVI

Photography
PAMELA LITTKY



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AVIGDOR ZAHNER-ISENBERG IS THE BEST NEW LYRICIST IN US INDIE. HE ALSO SEEMS TO BE UNDERGOING SOME KIND OF PROFOUND MENTAL COLLAPSE. **MARK BEAUMONT** WENT TO MEET HIM, TO LEARN WHAT MAKES HIM TICK, TO ASK... IS HE OK?

Avigdor Zahner-Isenberg talks like Niagara Falls. Words spew out in flurries. Sentences merge, condense and fly off at wild tangents. It's like the 19-year-old is breathing through his ears. In the first half-hour of our interview he speaks non-stop but completes only 12 sentences. Interrupting his flow with a question feels like throwing yourself in front of a speeding train or rousing Samuel Taylor Coleridge from the opium daze in which he wrote *Kubla Khan* to deliver him a pizza.

Ask the Avi Buffalo singer and songwriter, for example, if he ever showed any childhood artistic flair and, in a Long Beach drone uncannily reminiscent of Conor Oberst, you get this: "My parents were always really supportive... they always played me and my sister music and they didn't buy me toys or anything too much... I was a weird, antsy kid, hyperactive, so I had a lot of time to be drawing and writing stories... I'd write comic books when I was 11, and when I was five or six I would dictate these made-up stories about weird variations on *The Mask*, the movie with Jim Carrey that I'd never seen but I'd seen the adverts and wanted to put a spin on *The Mask* because it sounded like a really crazy movie, so..."

We daren't ask Avi if he's heard of full stops. In fact, this sentence is only a third finished. But you ain't seen nothing yet: later Avi will claim that "a lot of it is about playing something that makes sense and then something that doesn't make sense but then making the thing that doesn't make sense make sense" and almost make sense, sorta. To say Avi has a hypercharged, runaway mine cart of a mind is an understatement. This teenage weaver of the lush quirk.folk dreamscape – whose incredible eponymous album-of-the-year-contender debut, out now on Sub Pop, is equal parts MGMT, Sufjan Stevens, *The Wasteland*, Wilco, Red House Painters, *Naked Lunch*, Elliott Smith, Edward Lear, Fleet Foxes, The Flaming Lips and *Shortbus* – is to the snappy sound-bite what Crystal Castles are to fragile acoustic balladry. But spend an hour lost in 'conversation' with him and you begin to see how only Avi could have penned the surrealist stream-of-consciousness mood movies of his lyrics.

"*You made dessert that night and I could taste a robot's fist*" goes the charmingly titled (and actually quite charming) 'Summer Cum'. "*There once lived a soul whose ears/Lived nothing but open years*" Avi lilts on 'Coaxed'. "*The sky, to whom I made shady deals/Regarding money and girls*" goes 'Five Little Sluts'. Nonsense poems; impressionist imagery suggesting seduction, sex and sadness; mundane scenarios turned achingly romantic in the fine tradition of a Morrissey or Oberst. Fittingly, their 9/10-scoring *NME* review suggested Avi might just be the "US indie lyricist of his generation".

But delve beneath the gushing floodwaters of his imagination and there's darkness in young Avi's depths. "*Witches speak in my head all day*" he croaks on 'Truth Sets In'; "*You've been counting all the meltdowns you've been having*" keyboardist (and one-time sweetheart) Rebecca Coleman sweetly chides him on 'One Last'. By dusty ballad closer 'Where's Your Dirty Mind?', Avi's trauma-scarred teenage chest is bare and rent asunder: "*Too much time to die/And I just want to die*".

Avi has spoken himself of references to sexual frustration and self-hatred. Others have read into his lyrics a fragile, lovelorn soul undergoing rock's most wistful breakdown. Today we just thought we'd ask if Avi is OK...

You join us seven minutes into Avi's first sentence and so far this first utterance has taken in his childhood in Long Beach, California, where he still lives with his parents having graduated high school last year ("there isn't too much to do, which is a really good thing for the sake of playing music"), his recent tour with Japandroids ("really nice cool people everywhere") and his love of playing with friends outside the band ("to keep the juices flowing and keep me humble"). Then he explains how he started playing guitar at bar mitzvah parties as a 13-year-old skater kid.

"...I wanted to be a session musician or something like that and I was really into Jimi Hendrix and Led Zeppelin... I guess my first introduction into 'indie' music was Wilco around seventh grade, that was a band I heard through a weird Zionist socialist summer camp and it was all this hippy dippy stuff and all these people sharing music... fun hippy Jewish people, and some friend had introduced us to Wilco... there were all these new sounds and experimentation and 'Yankee Hotel Foxtrot' has all kinds of cool soundscapes and I thought, 'This seems well put together'... that was one of the first things that made me think making my own music, writing songs, could be a lot of fun..."

... and so as his musical tastes expanded in his teens to take in The Shins, Jim O'Rourke and Prefuse 73, Avi took on two mentors. The first was a blues musician friend of the family called Joel Weinberg who took Avi under his wing and out of the garage (where he was getting in trouble with the police for playing ear-splitting experimental noise jams for 14 hours a day with his first band). Joel trained Avi in the emotion of guitar playing and made him jam at a local blues club every Wednesday to "pay my dues and totally get my ass kicked playing-wise... it's the kind of teaching that's really intense, but that was the only way for me to learn because I have some strength but I'm also kind of spacey and totally ADD..."

The second was studio engineer and ex-Elliott Smith keyboardist Aaron Embry, who invited the now solidified line-up of Avi, Rebecca, drummer Sheridan Riley and bassist Arin Fazio to record in his home studio, "...so we found this really beautiful chemistry and recorded the song 'Summer Cum'. Then we were, like, 'Wow, this is fun'..."

The record they made – and which Embry recommended to his A&R friend Tony Kiewel at Sub Pop, who'd quickly sign them – was a personal portrait of a troubled teendom.

"...I was definitely a weirdo, I need a lot of time by myself and need to stay busy pretty intensely... if I don't stay busy then I'm just a total jerk, a little idiot a lot of the time... Some of it's about love, not necessarily in positive ways, a lot of frustration, mostly with myself, y'know when you're in an emotional time and you need to get something out..."

Why are you so frustrated, Avi?

"Nothing too crazy. If you're ever in a time of being down, whether it's love or you're feeling weird about general life... like any other teenager, growing pains go down."

He pauses for the first time today.

"If I don't stay busy I can get really down and mixed up and confused... but I just need to figure out how to get back in the zone again and channel some stuff. Depression has haunted my father's side of my family for years and years. It can be something you can deal with... but it's totally in there..."

Sexual frustration is pretty evident too.

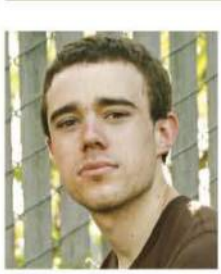
"...there's definitely sexual frustration, that kind of frustration is totally written about because it's on the mind or underneath, it's also part of the teenage stuff... there's hormones involved and there's intensity in youth and that's something I hope to keep a hold of, the juice of being young."

And so, with the vague hope that he never *quite* grows out of such sublime and perceptively rendered frustrations, there we leave him. Thanks for your time, Avi...

"Do you mind if I say thanks for all the help that we've had from everybody up to this point?" he flusters, like he's talking to the Academy Awards audience rather than to the readership of *NME*. "Thanks to Aaron Embry for being this fantastic genius... everyone at Sub Pop is beyond phenomenal... our friend Ashley Jexx, who started helping when all this crazy stuff started happening with business things, and our booking agent..."

OK, we really are going to leave it here now, but we wouldn't be surprised if Avi is still sat where we left him – breathing through his ears, thanking pets, milkmen and everyone at the CD pressing plant for helping him win the Most Exhausting *NME* Interview Ever award.

Oh yeah, is Avi OK? Oh, Avi's *amazing*.



"DEPRESSION HAS HAUNTED MY FAMILY FOR YEARS. THAT SHAPES MY SONGS"



AVI BUFFALO ON AVI

What the band have to say about their singer

REBECCA COLEMAN
Keyboards

How did you meet Avi?

"When I was a freshman in high school, through my friend George who had kind of been stalking him ever since he saw him play at a recital."

What did you think his songs were about?

"I knew because he'd told me. He had a big crush on me and was like, 'I'm writing these songs for you!'"

ARIN FAZIO
Bass

Tell us about meeting Avi...

"I met Avi through my friend Michelle Maroufus, she and her brother Paul put on this Long Beach house show called Maroufest. We talked about Wilco because he was wearing a Wilco shirt and I was too."

What did you think of him?

"I thought he was a funny little guy, he seemed like a very chipper, quirky guy."

SHERIDAN RILEY
Drums

You're the only member still at school, how are you juggling it?

"I can't say it's been too easy, I've been trying to finish *Hamlet* on tour."

What do you think Avi's songs are about?

"Romantic troubles and concerns. He's a thinker."

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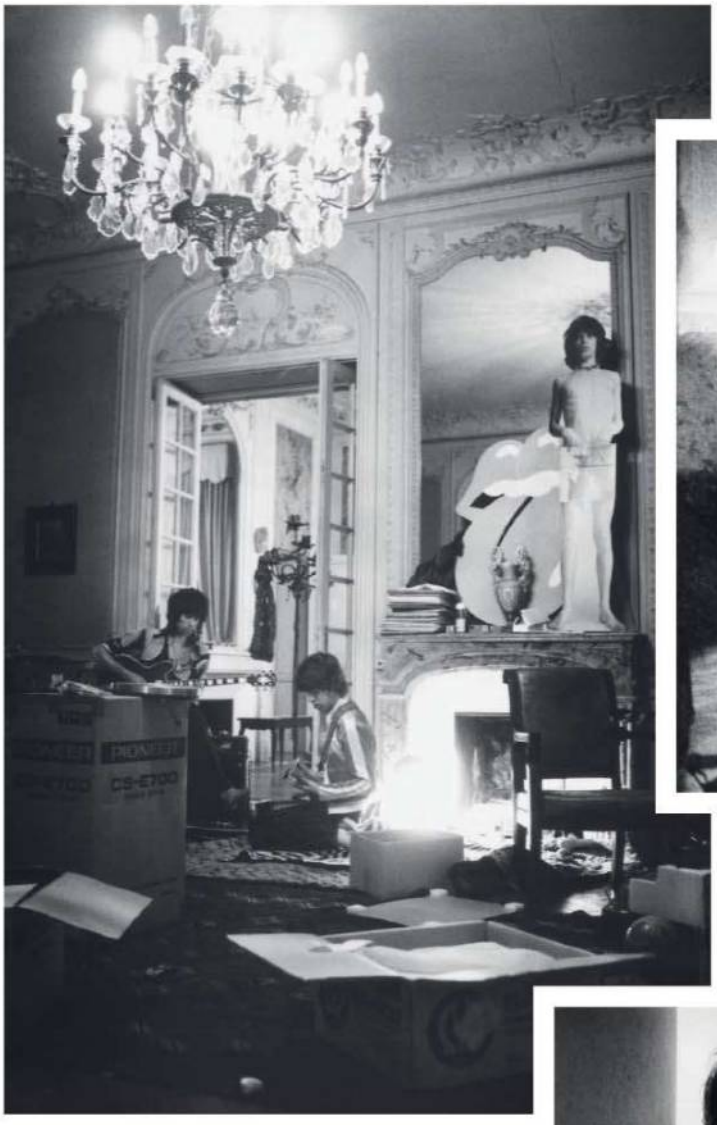


"[Keith's then girlfriend] Anita Pallenberg told me they could never find the keys to Nellcôte, so the gate and the main entrance remained open for the whole time they were there – everyone and anyone could come in and get out. It was crazy, but that's just the way it was, and for a long time it worked really well. We had absolutely no trouble... the trouble came months later for many other reasons. Anything you would like to buy in the south of France you could, be it heroin or whatever. Of course, in the end, word went around that the Stones were there and people took advantage of that. But it wasn't all dark – after all I'm still alive after six months in Nellcôte!"

THE STONES IN EXILE

In 1971 **Dominque Tarlé** *photographed The Rolling Stones as they recorded 'Exile On Main St' in the south of France. Legend has it that the album – remastered and re-released with 10 bonus tracks this week – was recorded in dark and difficult circumstances, yet Dominique's photos reveal a lighter side to life at Villa Nellcôte. Here he talks us through a selection...*

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v

"That's Keith next to keyboardist Nicky Hopkins on the piano. Nicky had been playing the theme from *West Side Story* on the piano and Keith started playing along with him on the acoustic guitar. Then when Nicky came to the end of the song, he started played the entire thing backwards, starting from the end and going back to the beginning. Keith couldn't imagine anyone doing that and he just started laughing."



v

"Gram Parsons had recorded a cover of the Stones' 'Honky Tonk Women' with his band The Flying Burrito Bros, but told Keith he'd always had problems playing the intro. Keith was playing it non-stop for over half an hour so Gram could watch his fingers until it was imprinted in his mind forever. I don't remember Gram going down to the basement to play on the 'Exile On Main St' sessions as some people have suggested, but the relationship between him and Keith was very special. Keith wanted to do an album with him on the Stones' new label and they were ready to record together – but of course Mick was afraid of the situation."



^

"Those big villas, when they are rented they are empty, there is nothing; no radio, no TV, no hi-fi equipment or anything. So, that day, Keith received his records from London and also this stereo equipment and we tried to put it together. We spent something like six or seven hours trying to get it working, but we just couldn't get a sound out of it. Then Mick came around and so the two of them decided that the best way to get some music was to just play it themselves."



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"You'll notice the rabbit in a box on the table. A lot of the musicians in the Stones and their entourage had kids, and Bianca [Mick Jagger's then-new wife] was pregnant. The rabbit was a gift from Bill Wyman to all of the kids at Nellcôte. He was staying out near Grasse and I think he captured the rabbit on his land. So there was the rabbit on the table in the middle of all the guitars and of course it just wanted to escape. The kids were frightened to touch it, so they would always get Keith to come and chase after it. It didn't last long!"

INTERVIEW: NATHANIEL CRAMP PHOTOS: DOMINIQUE TARLE

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^

"That's Keith with the female sphinx statues out the front of Nellcôte. When you look at his face, it's like he's saying to somebody, 'Where the hell are you going? What are you doing? You're not leaving, are you? You can't leave!' That's the way Keith is. If Keith made a friend out of you, you just couldn't leave, you were taken as a hostage! For me he was like a personal bodyguard. The non-verbal agreement between Keith and me was, 'You get high on pictures and music, stick to it, and I will take care of the rest.'"



^

"I think that night, like every night, Keith and Gram were playing country music together. Then Mick came around for the evening, grabbed a guitar and started playing blues – but he just wasn't in tune with what was going on. I think he was feeling quite uncomfortable with the situation."



>

"That day Mick and Gram and [saxophonist] Bobby Keys went to Nice and Cannes trying to buy Harley Davidsons – but they couldn't find any, so they all bought Honda 350s instead. I don't think Mick is looking very happy! I spent the afternoon taking pictures with him and Bianca. It's always a little difficult with Mick if you've got nothing special in mind. Bobby Keys was the only one who could give orders to Mick and he suggested some photos on the bike – I was sat on the back of Bobby's bike facing backwards like I was filming the Tour De France."



^

"It was always so hot in the basement – there was no fresh air, nothing [the 'Exile On Main St' song 'Ventilator Blues' is a reference to this]. On this day I decided to get some watermelon from the fridge for the musicians. I prepared them and put ice cubes in them, got a big tray and went downstairs – but I forgot there was a cable coming from the mobile recording truck that was parked outside and into the basement. I tripped over it, fell downstairs and dropped everything. I picked up the melon, but [producer] Jimmy Miller was so hot he just laid down on the ice cubes."



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"You can't see him, but Gram Parsons is on the right of this picture. Keith is playing and singing with Gram. Once again, Mick is yawning because he thinks it's a complete waste of time and that Keith should focus a little bit more on The Rolling Stones and a little bit less on Gram Parsons. Mick knew that if the Stones were to survive there was a lot of work ahead of them. They had just lost everything, the rights to all their songs to date, following a legal battle with their ex-manager Allen Klein."

Dominique Tarlé's photographs will be exhibited at La Galerie de l'Instant in Paris from May 21 – September 22. See *www.lagaleriedelinstant.com* for details.

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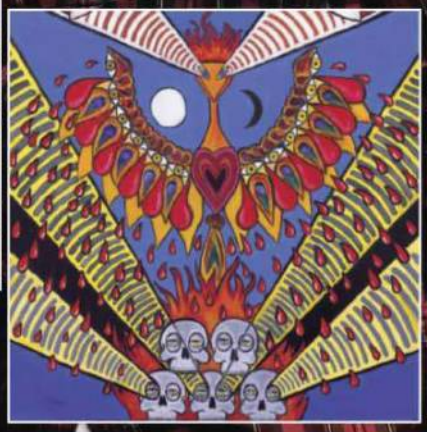
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REVIEWS

KELIS BLASTS BACK, BAND OF HORSES DEFY THE NEIGH-SAYERS, BILL HICKS REMEMBERED

Edited by Emily Mackay



PIETER M VAN HATTEM

LCD SOUNDSYSTEM

THIS IS HAPPENING DFA/EMI

He's set the bar high, but if this is to be James Murphy's swansong, it's a brave and powerful way to bow out



LCD Soundsystem kicked off the last decade by making the mother of all rods for their own back. The band's 2002 debut 12-inch 'Losing My Edge' can now arguably be called the best single of the noughties. A chromium-plated rave/rock monster, it celebrated the final breakdown between rave, punk and indie and emergent iPod culture. With a fucking killer beat. It was a meditation on the idea that our musical heritage isn't set in stone, but is instead a generational roundabout of constant reassessment, seen through the eyes of a narrator just waking up to this very fact. Its punchy chorus and one-note bass line (pilfered from War's 'Me And Baby Brother' via Killing Joke's 'Change') were party-friendly, while its primitive rave electronics and rapturous list of cool bands ("*The Sonics! The Sonics! The Sonics!*") were hypnotic. Record-collecting geeks, record store clerks, music obsessives like you and me were now the heroes – our borderline autistic behaviour celebrated by this new OCD Soundsystem. Then somehow, they built from this humble beginning to record what was, to a lot of people, the album of the decade, 'Sound Of Silver', in 2007.

So, no pressure then. Wisely, for his third album, James Murphy has pushed the outer shell of his band's sound briskly forward into stripped-down synth-pop, robotic electro and smooth new wave while retaining a powerful punk-funk undercarriage. 'Dance Yrself Clean' opens not with snarling acid-house Roland programming but fizzing and creaking Moogs and rhythms clattered out on pots and pans while Murphy does his best Kermit The Frog-impersonating-Mark E Smith voice. Then just as you're reaching over to the stereo to turn it up, he blasts you with both barrels of his disco shotgun. There are three other dialled-up-to-11 bangers here: the Kraftwerk-meets-Telex-meets-OMD techno of 'One Touch'; the sultry NYC ESG/Liquid Liquid jam of 'Pow Pow' and the Polynesian electro disco of 'Home'. Of course it's not all gravy; they come seriously unstuck with the obligatory Bowie/Fripp/Eno tribute 'All I Want' with its larcenous rip of "Heroes"'s guitars.

Murphy's exasperation at (somehow) ending up a magazine cover star is vented in the itchy new wave number 'You Wanted A Hit'. After a false start of Yellow Magic Orchestra synth pop, the track settles into the clipped, metronomic new wave of The Cars but with deep headphone dub effects over which he berates... well, who exactly? His audience? His critics? His record label? (Critics and audiences love him! He owns his record label!) Regardless, he shouts loudly about his inability to write a hit record. Of course, coming from the author of 'Daft Punk Is Playing At My House' and 'Someone Great', this makes him sound a bit like a mad messianic tramp on a motorway roundabout battling off unseen demons with an empty sherry bottle. Because of course, there are hits here. Like 'Drunk Girls', for example: a demented slice of electro punk that lies somewhere between Family Fodder's forgotten post-punk classic 'Dinosaur Sex' and The Velvet Underground's 'White Light/White Heat'.

Much has been made of the fact that this may be LCD's last album and while we want them to stay, it's easy to understand Murphy's desire to step out of the limelight. He is one of the least likely frontmen of recent years, but then, this is also one of his key strengths. If 'This Is Happening' must be a parting shot from this smartest and most human of dance machines, it's a fine one. Though by LCD's own standards this takes second place to 'Sound Of Silver''s unquestionable gold medal, by any other current band's measure this is an all-out classic. ***John Doran*** **8**

DOWNLOAD: 'One Touch', 'I Can Change', 'Home'

Watch James Murphy being attacked by fire extinguishers in the promo for 'Drunk Girls', plus see a band interview at *NME.COM/video* now

James Murphy Speaks!

Was this album more stressful than the previous two?
"This has been significantly less stressful than previous records. 'Sound Of Silver' was the most dreadful – at times. Since then I think I've been more calm because I just know it's going to work out. I have enough experience now at freaking out and then getting it done anyway. I have heavy stress attacks."

Only when making music?
"No, it's creating anything. Whether it be writing or making music. It's just very stressful... I don't really chill out. I'm an immersive person. If I'm reading a book, I just like to do that. So, making a record, I just like to do that every day. I don't like to be distracted too much."

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THE BLACK KEYS

BROTHERS V2/CO-OP MUSIC



One word seems to follow two-piece bands around: authentic. Plump for just drums and guitar and there's an assumption that what you're listening to is the musical version of a historical recreation society. The Black Keys are clearly determined not to get stuck in any such rut, with 'Brothers' marking the midway point between the garage-rock stylings of their first few albums and the hip-hop influence of last year's Blackroc side-project album. Danger Mouse, having produced that effort, returns to add production chill to 'Tighten Up''s infectious whistling, funked-up bass and sun-baked vocals, while the band's own soul-drenched fingerprints are smeared over the rest of the record. 'I'm Not The Only One' floats over with Empire Of The Sun-esque euphoria, 'Too Afraid To Love You' finds the band's desert-worn vocals joined by stately harpsichords, and closer 'These Days' sees heart-strung emotions crashing against guitar fuzz. Authentic? Who cares when it sounds this good? ***Paul Stokes*** **8**

DOWNLOAD: 'Tighten Up'

THE EIGHTIES MATCHBOX B-LINE DISASTER

BLOOD & FIRE BLACK



Exactly how many Class As can a band guzzle before emerging on the other side? Ask The Eighties Matchbox B-Line Disaster. Once Britrock's great weird hopes, TEMBD's intermittent missives betrayed a downward narcotic abuse spiral fit to put the 'disaster' into that moniker. Yet Guy McKnight's Buddhist shock-rock troops were always too eccentric to let such trivialities triumph. With the drugs shelved and a new guitarist, the band fucked off to France and returned with this. At first glance, the rebirth isn't startling, trademark psychobilly still spewing from every orifice. But when McKnight announces "*I could have died*" seconds into 'Love Turns To Hate', it's clear that dogged determination has superseded once-cocked eyebrows. The ghost of Cramps singer Lux Interior haunting Editors isn't a nice mental image, but that's pretty much where we find ourselves. By the time 'Under My Chin' swaggers around the corner like Josh Homme's undead lovechild, TEMBD's full pomp stomp approaches unstoppable momentum. Absorbing on an almost parasitic level. ***Adam Kennedy*** **7**

DOWNLOAD: 'Love Turns To Hate'

GAYNGS

RELAYTED JAGJAGUWAR



Beware: this album is decadent and sprawling and playing it loud will get you beaten up by righteous indie fans. And it's all the better for it. Apparently inspired by Ryan Olsen's passion for 10cc's 'I'm Not In Love', no record of the last two decades has so wholly rejected the status quo. 'Relayted' is the soundtrack to being strung out in the back of a cab hurtling through a neon-lit city at 4am in 1983 looking for carefree thrills and sybaritic joys. 'The Gaudy Side Of Town' and 'Spanish Platinum' sound like the tipping point between hazy narcotic fug and urban paranoia that Tricky used to do so well, while 'Faded High' bubbles along like Kraftwerk's 'The Model' queuing up for Studio 54. Antique keyboards pulse, fretless basses thrum and a variety of voices echo in and out, underlying the trippy feel and making this pretty much the most scintillating and daring record of the year so far. Buy it. Play it. Get beaten up for being different. ***Anthony Thornton*** **9**

DOWNLOAD: 'Spanish Platinum'

Faces To Names...

What the reviewers are doing this week



GAVIN HAYNES

"I have been house-hunting. I have also taken a stand against corporate self-interest in the media, and blown sherbert into a sleeping dog's mouth to make it think it had rabies."



PETE CASHMORE

"Watching *Harpoon*, the greatest Icelandic slasher film (about whale-watching). It's not very good, but Gunnar Hansen – Leatherface in *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, is in it."



JOHN DORAN

"While out I've been dancing to Factory Floor and LCD Soundsystem. When in I've been rinsing Slayer and drinking espresso until I feel like I can control the weather."



BARRY NICOLSON

"Schlepping around Britain on the NME Radar Tour: late nights, early mornings. Been reading Neal Stephenson's *Quicksilver* and savouring the Gaynge and Broken Social Scene LPs."



KELIS

FLESH TONE POLYDOR

With a new-found love of banging choons, she's living up to her own legend yet again...



Ah, Kelis! 'Milkshake'. Genius. Pop auteur. Credible diva. And other such feeble journalistic platitudes that belie the fact that the last time she released a hit, it was 2003. Her most recent album, 2006's 'Kelis Was Here', tanked, and rightly so. Since then? Radio silence. She's been doing the real-life thing: having a baby, divorcing Nas. In pop terms, four years is an aeon, seven the entire history of the universe. To say that her back was against the wall coming into 'Flesh Tone' is to overstate things: the reality was that people no longer cared either way.

So there's a convenient plucky-underdog narrative ready to be spun when we tell you that 'Flesh Tone' has already filled out an application form for pop record of the year. Kelis is about to become big news again.

Its main thesis is this: Kelis loves robots but isn't that bothered about R&B anymore. '22nd Century' offers the keynote address: "*Welcome to the 22nd century/Religion, science fiction, technology*". The hoover-house synths that are shortly to become album hallmarks swoop in; a massive four-to-the-floor kick-drum kicks off, and we're swept into a hyper-saturated world of frazzled diva futurism, before the whole thing drowns itself in wave after wave of ear-candy digitised bleeps and gurgles. This, it has to be said, is already the track after the one where she goes Italo disco. But before the ones where she goes Ed Banger, or Jason Nevins, or David Guetta.

Brilliantly, while 'Flesh Tone' is in thrall to dance music, it seems agnostic as to whether it prefers the credible type or the chart sludge. Instead, it chooses to celebrate the sheer brain-bending sonic possibilities of the thing in all its forms: a tour de rave of minor-key Oakenfold trance riffs ('Home'), housey samba styles ('Emancipate'), electroclash bridges ('Scream), DFA1979 distorted crash cymbals ('Brave'), sleek nu-disco ('Intro') and everything inbetween. The fact that she worked with both Benni Benassi and Diplo; both Will.i.am and Boys Noize, offers some sense of how wilfully naive Kelis has been in her choices. The fact it's not a hypercolour abomination offers some sense of how smart she has been in her execution. Seldom since 'Miss E... So Addictive' has a star from the R&B world displayed such fannish intimacy with the dance world. Her way with a melody has not deserted her. Her ability to appear unimpeachably cool hasn't wavered either. But these are as nothing. What's important here is simply her direction: a genuinely innovative bearing that breaks new ground for pop without sounding any less pop for it. Kelis. Genius. Pop auteur. Credible diva. Welcome back. ***Gavin Haynes*** **8**

DOWNLOAD: 'Intro', '22nd Century', 'Fourth Of July (Fireworks)'

www.WorldMags.net & www.Journal-Plaza.net



BAND OF HORSES

INFINITE ARMS COLUMBIA

Soft and tender country-inflected comfort blanket rock from Seattle. The perfect tonic for the times



It can't be much fun being an American right now. Quite apart from all the baggage that comes with, you know, being an American, you have to contend with an economic downturn that makes our own look like we're just a little bit short until payday. There's also a sudden but non-coincidental rise in extreme right-wing gun-nut militias who don't much care for black presidents, and the fact that the rest of the world hates you.

But, in troubled times, certain people still prosper – it might not be a great time for the liberal small business owner, but it's a great time to be an American country-rock combo – when your potential listenership feels adrift in the modern era, a hapless plaything buffeted by the tremors of collapsing banks, a little intimacy and calming pastoralism goes a long way. So, in a very real sense, we can thank inept investment bankers for Fleet Foxes.

And in such troubled times, Seattle's Band Of Horses are like a lovely, comforting lumberjack shirt, and 'Infinite Arms' sees them doing exactly what they do, beguilingly and delightfully. No great leaps forward from 'Everything All The Time' and 'Cease To Begin', just lovely, warm-hearted, full-throated harmonies and gentle melancholy. The title track is the stand-out, guitar strings creating the shimmering effect of heat rising off boiling asphalt, and there are similarly charming jollies to be gleaned from the lolloping, languid 'Older', the rollicking bar-room balls-out rawk of 'Northwest Apartment', the painfully soft, tender rock (as opposed to 'soft rock') of 'Blue Beard', and the incongruously jolly, High Llamas-esque 'Compliments', which comes over a bit like a weeping, heartbroken drunkard at the bar suddenly pausing to tell you a really funny joke.

So if you're a bewildered, alienated blue-collar American adrift on the ebb-tide of the technological era in a land you no longer recognise, you've just found your life-raft. The good news is, the rest of us can enjoy it too. ***Pete Cashmore*** **8**

DOWNLOAD: 'Infinite Arms', 'Older', 'Blue Beard'

EDDY CURRENT SUPRESSION RING

RUSH TO RELAX MELODIC



Melbourne's rawest, rudest and most uncomplicatedly lovable quartet released their first two Australian albums over here as a double-disc set last summer. Now we're fully primed in their rough-and-ready, mile-a-minute garage-rock ways they've only gone and thrown another musical shrimp on the barbie! Xenophobic jokes aside, their early Kings/Black Lips/Soft Pack rattle'n'roll is like ham sandwiches – simple, tasty. Recorded in mere hours for mere pence, it's got all the energy and dynamism of a pencil sketch. "We never want music to feel like a chore," says guitarist Mikey Young. Too true. ***Emily Mackay*** **6**

DOWNLOAD: 'Anxiety'

ANDY WHITTON

TRASH TALK

EYES & NINES HASSLE



In many ways Sacramento-based sludgecore outfit Trash Talk's third album is a masterclass in sonic violence. Majoring in decapitation by guitar, the much-talked-about mob's 60-second assaults could give Bruce Banner a run for his money in the rage stakes and the record as a whole features more short sharp shocks than a dodgy kettle. Yes, we could have done without the plodding, church-baiting 'Hash Wednesday,' but songs such as 'Explode,' and 'On A Fix' more than make up for it and are so incredibly abrasive that you probably shouldn't put 'Eyes & Nines' next to valuable records on your shelf. Just in case. ***Edwin McFee*** **7**

DOWNLOAD: 'Explode'

Key Notes

Best sleeve of the week



The Black Keys 'Brothers'
One thing we love around here is clear signposting. You wouldn't accidentally try to use this as a toothbrush, would you?

Worst sleeve of the week



Kelis, 'Flesh Tone'
The Claire's Accessories bombings of 2010 scarred many lives

Best lyric of the week

"I wanna fuck/I wanna run amok"
The Eighties Matchbox B-Line Disaster, 'Man For All Seasons'

Worst lyric of the week

"Lucid illusions of Hades in HD/Caps are a blast but to please me you need TNT"
Trash Talk, 'TNT'

Reviewed Next Week...

Rolo Tomassi, 'Cosmology'
Stornoway, 'The Beachcomber's Windowsill'
Pendulum, 'Immersion'

YOU SAY PARTY! WE SAY DIE!

XXXX PAPER BAG



Though tragedy followed recording, it's tough to approach the latest from these Canadians without hearing the heaviness first. Following the death of drummer Devon Clifford last month their third album seems swamped in mourning – the proto-goth synths, funereal Interpol atmospheres and lyrics of loss gleam bleakly to the fore. But it's important not to ignore the bright points. Notably the yearning melodicism at the heart of 'Lonely's Lunch' and the elegant beacon of optimism that is closer 'Heart Of Gold'. 'XXXX' is too full of life to be their memorial record. ***Mark Beaumont*** **8**

DOWNLOAD: 'Lonely's Lunch'

DEAD MEADOW

THREE KINGS XEMU



You'd have thought a namecheck in *The Wire* – frontman Jason Simon is David Simon's nephew – would constitute more than enough screentime for your average peyote-lashed heavy desert-rock trio. Not so. Instead Dead Meadow have ventured further into the broadcast world with their own fantasy flick/concert movie, *Three Kings*. The fuzzed-up, spaced-out live numbers on its soundtrack are unsurprising; it's the five new studio tracks which thrill. The Hendrix holler of 'That Old Temple', poppy 'Darlin' and lush lady vox-ed 'Push 'Em To The Crux' show that Dead Meadow are in rude health. ***Leonie Cooper*** **7**

DOWNLOAD: 'That Old Temple'

DEFTONES

DIAMOND EYES WARNER BROS



It's a decade since 'White Pony' finally pushed Deftones towards wider critical acceptance, but as 'Diamond Eyes' shows, they've always sounded timeless. And despite having a rich story behind it – they recorded an album ('Eros') but before its release bassist Chi Cheng was hospitalised; former Quicksand man Sergio Vega was drafted in and before they knew it they'd written this – 'Diamond Eyes' is as gloriously non-era-specific as ever. 'Rocket Skates' and 'You've Seen The Butcher' both reward repeat listening and impress on the first blast, and the bloodthirsty 'Risk' is a real throwback to their early days. A brilliant, invigorating reintroduction. ***Rob Parker*** **8**

DOWNLOAD: 'Rocket Skates'

JAMIE LIDELL

COMPASS WARP



Britain's foremost whiteboy funkateer has learned enough since his 2005 major label debut 'Multiply' for 'Compass' to pull off a neat trick. With his heart as his guide (opener 'Completely Exposed' and the title track show that some serious heartbreak and soul-searching's been going on), Lidell gives us a tour of soul through his geographically-removed ears. Bill Withers' drummer James Gadson propels the sunshine-funk shuffle of 'Enough's Enough', America's foremost whiteboy funkateer Beck brings the junkyard groove, while Lidell drops his paisley pants for some of Prince's purplest moments on the extended metaphor of 'I Wanna Be Your Telephone'. Makes you think of touch-tone in a whole new way. ***Jason Draper*** **6**

DOWNLOAD: 'I Wanna Be Your Telephone'

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AMERICAN: THE BILL HICKS STORY (VERVE PICTURES)

Compelling documentary shows the many complex sides of the boundary-pushing late comedian

FILM OF THE WEEK

A couple of years ago, the internet was aswirl with rumours that gruff Aussie actor Russell Crowe was set to play Bill Hicks in a biopic of the American comic's short, sad yet inspirational life. The reasons why this would be a terrible idea are obvious. Most glaring is the inevitable Oscar-friendly sheen that would be applied to Hicks' complex and happy ending-free story. No, his legacy is infinitely better served by the documentary format, if only because, for Hicks, as one childhood friend attests, "Revelation always had to be firsthand."

Much of *American* is drawn from a huge archive of unseen photos and VHS footage that Bill entrusted to his mother before his death, "in case someone comes and they want to make a documentary about me". The rest is from over 120 hours of interviews with family and friends, whose memories and anecdotes are brought to eerie, cardboard cut-out 'life' with a photo-animation style that starts off quirky but soon gets gimmicky.

It's *American*'s only fault, but hardly a fatal flaw; much of the running time is devoted to Hicks' live performances, spanning the years between the fresh-faced prodigy of the Houston comedy circuit and the embattled philosopher-comedian of his final days. In-between we see glimpses of his struggle with booze and drugs, downing drink after drink onstage and spewing out bitterness and regret in return, clearly troubled but still hilarious.

The film's lofty title is deserved. Hicks pushed the boundaries of what was acceptable not just in American comedy, but American society – at one point, he's pictured smirkingly lighting a cigarette on a burning flag – and was ruthlessly censored for it. The film subsequently lionises Hicks as a martyr for free speech but its most revealing moments are the human ones, like a dying Bill taking one last mushroom trip with his buddies, still searching for answers.

Micro-budgeted but made with a surplus of heart, *American* probably comes as close to capturing Hicks' unbound, ever-questioning spirit as any movie can. ***Barry Nicolson*** **7**

Watch the trailer at *NME.COM/movies* now

KONONO NO 1
ASSUME CRASH POSITION CRAMMED DISCS



For four decades, Konono No 1 have been rooting through the junkyards of Kinshasa for scrap to build the instruments with which they twist traditional Bazombo trance music into a relentless groove. Distorted likembé thumb piano creates a trembling melody over the undulating percussion in the likes of 'Mama Na Bana', about the mother of your children leaving for another man. Life and love are similarly explored in the discordant 'Fula Fula', while the melodious eddies of 'Konono Wa Wa Wa' quiver with a sense of vitality and experimentation that no British groups of Konono's vintage can possibly match. ***Luke Turner*** **8**

DOWNLOAD: 'Konono Wa Wa Wa'

VILLA NAH
ORIGIN KEYS OF LIFE



No prizes for guessing what Villa Nah sound like. They're a Finnish duo comprised of two boyhood friends with yin and yang music tastes and temperaments. They make Human League-indebted synth-pop about waiting for the first sunbeam to break through the dark shell of winter under which Finland broods. To all intents and purposes, they are the Nordic Hurts, minus the giddily bombastic campness those boys keep us hooked with. Consequently, 'Origin' wields no surprises – it's full of OMD/Giorgio Moroder plunderings with all the cold, dead ingenuity of a particularly irritating polyphonic ringtone. Their attempts at alluring frostiness are tepid at best. ***Laura Snapes*** **4**

DOWNLOAD: Anything by OMD instead

THE RIDER
What we're reading, watching and scamming



DVD
The Road
Adapted from the Cormac McCarthy novel, *The Road* is about one man (Viggo Mortensen) and his son (Kodi Smit-McPhee) battling to survive in a post-apocalyptic world.



Cinema
ODDSAC
A visual album by everyone's favourite experimentalists Animal Collective and Danny Perez. The screening hits London (Thurs), Manchester (Fri) and Leeds (Sat).

Win!
HOT TUB TIME MACHINE GOODY BAG



***Hot Tub Time Machine* (DVD)**
Hot Tub Time Machine is out now and to celebrate the guys have given us an iPod Touch, their official soundtrack and the top five '80s albums to give away! Go to *NME.COM/win*

SINGLES
This week reviewed by **ANDREW WK**



ATARI TEENAGE RIOT
ACTIVATE! DIGITAL HARDCORE



This song rules! I have loved Atari Teenage Riot since I first heard them back in the late '90s – their energy and focus have always been inspiring. Alec Empire is a master. I'm so excited that they're playing again! 'Activate!' is the perfect jam to blast us into a new level of hardcore, sonic glory! Go, ATR, go! All systems activate!

WHITE RABBITS
THEY DONE WRONG/WE DONE WRONG MUTE



I like the way this starts – with surprising changing rhythms! I also like this band's name as I've always loved white rabbits, especially with big blood-red eyes. This sounds like a rabbit – friendly, calm, soft. At first, it's like the music people hear as they board an airplane. But then it grows and expand! The rabbits start mating and producing musical babies! White Rabbits done wrong? NO! They done right!

CHIDDY BANG
TRUTH PARLOPHONE



I really appreciate that this song works with half-time and double-time tempos. That's always fun, and pretty rare in pop music. It's very effective at keeping the song engaging and makes the energy very dynamic. Pump the dance beat! Four on the floor chorus! Then pull it back to a heavy groove for the verse! It works every time.

NEW YOUNG PONY CLUB
WE WANT TO THE NUMBERS



I have always loved small horses, but never understood the whole 'pony' thing. I have nothing against ponies, but the idea of a bunch of new young ponies forming a club, it just doesn't seem that possible... As for the music, I really, really like the vocals. It's rare for me to hear a voice that just sounds like someone singing, rather than a singer singing. When a singer sings, it's like when a bee makes honey. But when a human being sings, it's like when a bee stings.

DRAKE
OVER YOUNG MONEY



I've heard this in New York City. It's a very special song – the beat on the verse is a breakthrough! It almost sounds like two songs combined – switching back and forth – it's pretty extreme in that regard. The chorus is almost like a totally different song, and then the beat kicks in and it's a double chorus! Then a triple chorus! Drake specialises in monster hooks.

LETHAL BIZZLE & NICK BRIDGES FT LUCIANA
GO GO GO V2



Woah! This is a song built for energy! It's built for going crazy! Anything with a four-on-the-floor kick has got me in a good place, and when you start saying the word 'GO', then I'm hooked! Saying 'GO' is just so fun. I have a song called 'Party Til You Puke' where I shout 'GO' about 90 times, and it never loses its thrill.

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Plan B: "Hold on, I can do a *really* high note!"

LIVE

HOLE PUSH IT, RADAR TOUR

Edited by Emily Mackay

CAMDEN CRAWL

VARIOUS VENUES, CAMDEN, LONDON SATURDAY, MAY 1 – SUNDAY, MAY 2

London's most queue-tastic weekender is full of thorny line-up choices, so we sent Sam Wolfson and Leonie Cooper down to choose their own adventures...

PLAN B'S SETLIST

- Writing's On The Wall
- The Recluse
- Welcome To Hell
- She Said
- What You Gonna Do
- Praying
- Coming Up Easy
- Charmaine
- Stay Too Long

SATURDAY

Sam's Day

Camden is unique, not just because punk, goth, metal, trance and Britpop all passed through here, but because it's the mass grave for all these defunct musical genres. It's where subcultures go to die; the Eastbourne of rock'n'roll.

Yet the one thing these traditions would agree on is that a performance by a girl band with none of its original members is a fucking bizarre way to begin a festival that's supposed to pay tribute to Camden's alt. heritage. And yet here we are, about to watch **Sugababes** open the Camden Crawl 2010. You can't fault the tunes. 'Freak Like Me' and 'About You Now' are some of the best British pop songs ever written. But these women never recorded them (well, Heidi did, but she doesn't count). So we're essentially watching a Sugababes tribute act, that should be playing weddings and bat mitzvahs, not the bleedin' Roundhouse.

Things aren't much better with indie girl bands. **The Like** are showcasing their new Pipettes-with-guitars shtick to a rammed Flowerpot. They remain sullen throughout. "I've just woken up from a nap," says lead singer Z Berg by way of explanation. After they close with lacklustre new single 'He's Not A Boy', we could do with one ourselves.

Plan B is a commanding force until he announces his Paolo Nutini cover

Back at the Roundhouse, **Plan B**'s flaunting his own new direction. His singing seems strained but when he's rapping he's a commanding force. Just as we're starting to think that, actually, a rapper in a suit backed by a horn section isn't a terrible idea, he announces he's doing a Paolo Nutini cover and we have to leave.

The big surprise of the night is **Ms Dynamite**'s confident set at Dingwalls. Highlights include a dubstep version of 'Dy-Na-Mi-Tee' and her version of So Solid Crew's 'They Don't Know' although what really gets us in a tizz are the snippets of her new breakstep material.

We swing past **Male Bonding** – whose pummeling assault on The Purple Turtle has boys getting sweaty and girls hot under the collar – before arriving at the Jazz Café for **Summer Camp**, whose knowing teen-movie lo-fi sounds better live than it does on the demos (and those were good to start with). ***SW***

Leonie's day

The first **Drums** show of Saturday is a lesson in how acting like a plonker can still somehow make you cool. As Jonathan Pierce flings himself around the Barfly to the goth-beat of 'Best Friend', and indulges in some synchronised finger-clicking with his band during 'Don't Be A Jerk, Johnny', it's evident that not giving a toss is totally the new giving one.

Manchester madam Julie Campbell, aka **Lonelady**, does give a toss, but then with her kind of Factory Records frottaging and taut intensity, it's pretty

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Comanechi: beat that outfit, Keith Moon!


When front rows go wrong

much essential. Like the Gossip if they were writing tunes in a Moss Side flatshare in 1981, 'Nerve Up"s highly-strung soul fits perfectly with the grey drizzle outside Jazz Café.

We meet with a familiar face at the Cuban Bar – that of Frederick Blood Royale, ex of Les Incompetents and Ox. Eagle.Lion.Man – doing an unfamiliar thing, slick yacht rock and doo-wop pop: **Club Royale** are all Tony Bennett panache and cruise ship slickness. **The Smoke Fairies**' KOKO set, though, is more sombre – the duo's deadpan banter aside – with sultry Sandy Denny sonics lighting up 'Frozen Heart' and their *Wicker Man*-worthy blues riffs equally thrilling and chilling. ***LC***

SUNDAY

Sam's day

We return on Sunday for **Gaggle**. Twenty-three women booming through punk poetry is life-affirming stuff and the sizeable crowd leave beaming. Their nerves are uncomfortable to watch, but their lack of cynicism has rubbed off on us.

Well, for 10 minutes anyway: the next few hours are comparatively mediocre. **Lightspeed Champion** plays what sounds like a half-hour indie version of 'Bohemian Rhapsody' but is actually a medley of songs from new record 'Life Is Sweet!...'. The odd juxtapositions mean ballsy Thin Lizzy-style guitar harmonics are up against Dev Hynes' kooky acoustic material, like listening to 6 Music if all the songs were performed by one guy.

Comanechi look spectacular (Akiko in floral leotard and Simon in a giant woolly jumper with Aztec print) but their 'screechy, screechy, bash, bash' approach tires after a few songs.

We finish with **Yuck**, a band so desperate to pay homage to Sonic Youth, Dinasour Jr and Pixies they're in danger of pastiche. But isn't that the spirit of Camden? At least Yuck have found a creative outlet for their admiration. ***SW***

Leonie's day

Sunday starts with **Kyte** at The Black Heart and the sort of humourless, looped synth-indie by numbers that we can blame Snow Patrol for. It makes us love **Surfer Blood** at The Underworld even more, thanks to their unponcified friendly frat-house fun. A baby-faced scuzz-punk Weezer, it's impossible to deny the amazingness of 'Swim"s Pavement-high-fiving-the-Beach-Boys slacker pop.

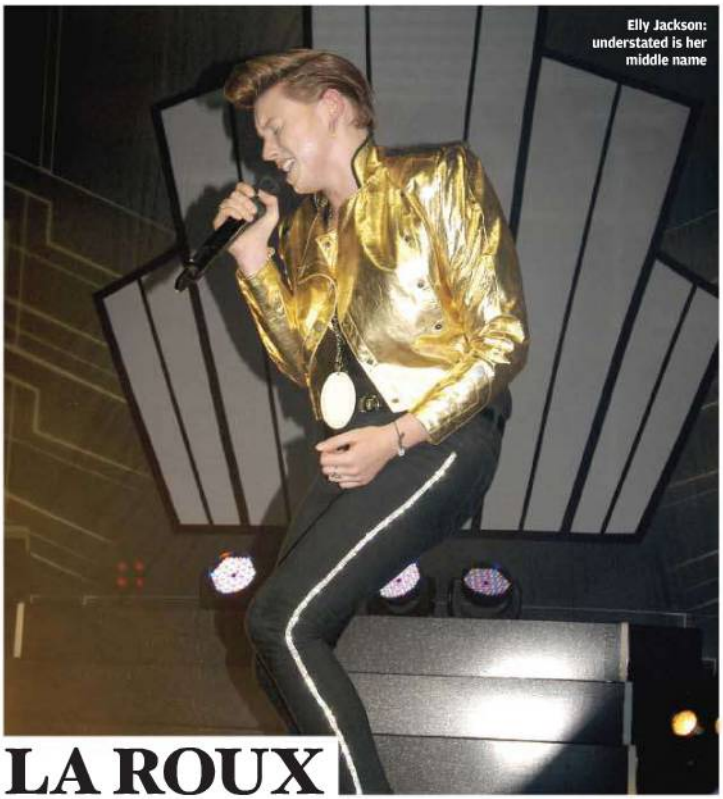
Taking on jangling guitars and teenage angst, **Veronica Falls**' 'Found Love In A Graveyard' is lo-fi gold. Their Blues Kitchen set is infused with a vintage fuzz which extends beyond the bedroom psych of 'Beachy Head' to the way Roxanne Clifford sings from behind her veil of hair and the polite request for "more reverb" from the tech. It leaves us with a warm feeling. Warmer than the Bank Holiday chill outside that's for sure. ***LC***

BIG MOUTH
The noise from the crowd



Jade Suckley

"It does sort of feel like a proper festival here, certainly in the way that everyone's really drunk. It was so cool to see Surfer Blood in such a tiny venue. And Yuck were great too, really Sonic Youth-y. I'm off to KOKO now for Drums Of Death. I'm all on my own, do you want to come with?"


Elly Jackson: understated is her middle name

LA ROUX

CORN EXCHANGE, CAMBRIDGE

THURSDAY, APRIL 29

Bored of the '80s already? In the face of Elly Jackson's golden glory, not for long you're not

It might just be her lucky colour, but the title of La Roux's victory-lap Gold Tour is apt. Mainly because it's impossible to think of that word, in the wake of a few years of '80s nostalgia, without hearing the chorus to Spandau Ballet's massive 1983 hit of the same name.

Like much else in '80s culture, that song was flamboyant, escapist and courageous, but mangled by the catalytic converter of the engine of culture, it's become silly, safe and kitsch. Yet though the merest notes of its chorus, or the very mention of that decade, now makes us claw our faces in rage, La Roux, the most fervent revivalist of them all, we still love. Gold, you see, can be purified of dross if your flame burns hot enough.

In the short year-and-a-half since we first saw her stepping nervily, wired with energy, onto the stage at Notting Hill Arts Club, to say Elly Jackson's grown into herself as a performer would be understating it. Striding on to a platform in front of an Art Deco-styled video screen, she's mercurial, fleet of foot, and becloaked Phantom-style with swooping white sleeves, as calamitous kettle drums herald 'Tigerlily"s obscure menace. She throws her skinny frame into it with scary physical intensity on 'Quicksand' and an electro-muscled 'I'm Not Your Toy', soft-shoe-shuffling like a cyborg Smokey Robinson.

Sadly, rumours of new songs prove unfounded. We do get 'Growing Pains', the decent-enough UK bonus track from the album, and, more interestingly, the original pre-La Roux version of French bonus track 'Finally My Saviour'. The bare folky bones of the sort of song that Elly's fateful meeting with Ben Langmaid made into killer heartbreak machines, its smoky acoustic charms are pleasing in a Mazzy Star/Fiona Apple sort of way, but the interest is mainly in a 'making-of' context.

Much more thrilling is her take on The Rolling Stones' 'Under My Thumb'. Stalking the stage, rather than do anything as easy as reimagine the song with feminist irony, she embodies its wounded cruelty, wailing about her triumph as big, harsh, juddering *Miami Vice* synths slash across the red-and-black lit stage. It's *amazing*.

And she hasn't even cracked out the big ones yet! 'In For The Kill' is, of course, colossal, and the dangerously hormonal crowd boil over as Elly's gold-painted face appears on the screen, eyes lit up with blue deathrays. For 'Bulletproof', she cracks out the inevitable gold jacket, giving it the Freddie Mercury with outstretched arms. As she closes with 'Fascination"s effusive Erasure-isms, we're so fired up, we neither know nor care what decade it is. Always, you see, believe in your soul. ***Emily Mackay***

ANDY WILLSHER, SUZIE BLAKE, ELKE MIETZEL

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THE NEAT

LEEDS UNIVERSITY UNION, SATURDAY, MAY 1

Most bands who pay, ahem, tribute to Joy Division do so by dressing head-to-toe in black, pretending to have an epileptic fit onstage and singing their faux gloomy songs in a fashion that recalls The Count from *Sesame Street* gargling pins. Thankfully The Neat aren't one of these bands. In a month that marks the 30th anniversary of Ian Curtis' death, it's refreshing to stumble upon a group that recall the emotionally fraught wonder of his band in a way much more becoming than that of the aforementioned doom-mongers. A four-piece from Hull (so they obviously know their fair share about misery), The Neat pay respectful homage to Curtis' lot by playing their instruments like they're trying to garrote them, delivering their songs with a ferocity that suggests they're trying to ward off evil spirits rather than just make their dank sounds, and by being the first band since the days of those very early Horrors shows where you come away worrying about the emotional wellbeing of the people concerned.

Not that Joy Division is their only reference point; there's nods to the skeletal post-punk sound of early '80s Flying Nun in there, while 'Ode To Joy', gut-rumbling bass intro and all, recalls Josef K sped up to a thrash-punk tempo. Best of all is 'Fruits', a sardonic diatribe on "popular music", a phrase they spit out repeatedly with thrilling disdain. Hey, Interpol! Watch and learn. ***James McMahon***

SUICIDE

HMV HAMMERSMITH APPOLO, LONDON SUN, MAY 2

Suicide have never been ones to court public affection. Early electronic music had been smooth until Alan Vega and Martin Rev imbued it with the spirit of punk. Not that the punks liked them. At one gig with The Clash, Vega had an axe thrown at him. As a thank you for everyone's patience, he often locked the doors at gigs so no-one could escape their torment.

Tonight the doors are open but no-one is leaving. Not just because everyone is waiting for Iggy & The Stooges to come on to tear through 'Raw Power', either. This live outing for Suicide's 1978 debut comes at a time when MIA's sampling of 'Ghost Rider', plus their influence on The Horrors and Factory Floor, is forcing their noise on a new generation. Vega's voice, now weathered, dips to a lowly grumble during 'Johnny', and the sonics provided by Rev on 'Girl' are less of a recreation than a poetic reinterpretation – albeit a caustic one that proves they can still muster the apocalyptic energy of Suicide 1978. ***Ash Dosanjh***



BROKEN SOCIAL SCENE

HENRY FONDA THEATRE, LA MONDAY, MAY 3

It's a bit like going to a festival, watching a Broken Social Scene gig. At a festie you're roaming around as the sounds from one stage waft onto another, and all the music piles into your ears like an American breakfast where they serve the bacon and potatoes and toast and syrup on one plate and it goes whooshing down into your guts in one big heap.

Well, Broken Social Scene may be only one band but, with their ever-changing cast of members, their music has just that multiple pile-up effect. Tonight's show starts gently enough with 'World Sick', from new album 'Forgiveness Rock Record', but before you realise it, those guitars that jangle with West African glee have grown into wide boulevards of sound, and the drums are crashing in, and is that a bit of electronics in the back? And now a bit of brass? And who are those new people onstage, and how and when did we start dancing?

The most famous member, Feist, isn't playing tonight, but new girl Lisa Lobsinger covers the old classics like 'Anthems For A Seventeen Year-Old Girl'. It's like watching a sped-up Fleetwood Mac, all the instruments hurtling down a Californian highway at night.

'Texico Bitches', too, sounds ruddy marvellous, with co-frontman Kevin Drew whipping all our arms into the air like a rallying cry at a march. Like a call to arms for – who knows what? Who cares? I've never quite worked out the point of Broken Social Scene. The point is not the point. It's all one big happy breakfast. ***Sophie Heawood***

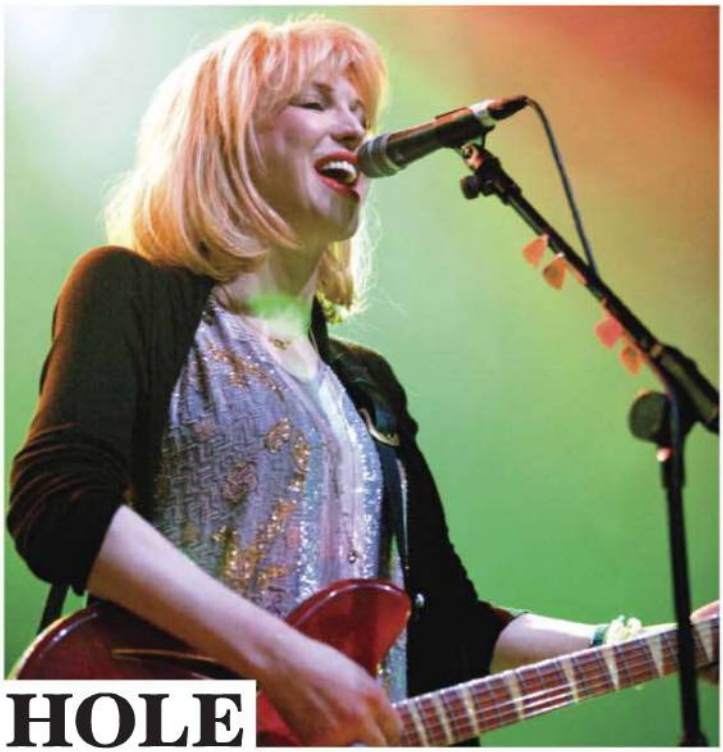
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- 2 x crusty bread (white & brown)
- 1 x butter
- 1 x peanut butter
- 1 x mustard
- 2 x cartons good quality hummus
- 1 x Quorn sandwich meat
- 2 x veggie pork pies
- 2 x veggie scotch eggs
- Platter of assorted non-processed meats
- Platter of assorted non-processed cheeses
- Platter of assorted salad vegetables
- 6 x small packets of crisps
- 1 x tortilla chips
- 2 x chocolate bars
- Liquorice
- 1 x bag mixed nuts (unsalted)



HOLE

O2 ACADEMY GLASGOW MONDAY, MAY 3

Exposing tracks old and new, even with a shredded voice Love conquers all

Not content with just being back on the live scene, Courtney Love is aiming for a higher target. She wants to be muthafucking Bruce Springsteen.

"How long have I been playing for?" asks Love, massaging her shredded throat towards the end of this mammoth gig. "Two hours? Man, I wanted to go for the Springsteen three-hour mark as a postmodern experiment. How does that man do it?" There's only one way Courtney can keep up with The Boss: sing until a) her throat collapses into mush or b) the crowd get bored and leave. A quick look around suggests that it's going to have to be option A. Tonight Courtney proves all the haters and doubters wrong with a raucous, melodramatic and beautiful set of old and new. The opening gambit of 'Pretty On The Inside', which merges into a cover of the Stones' 'Sympathy For The Devil', is a clever touch. Also impressive is her version of Leonard Cohen's 'Take This Longing'; if only for the fact it's a Cohen song that isn't bloody 'Hallelujah'. And at one point, Love strips down to her frilly undies. Performance is art, bitch. Of Hole's own compositions, 'Miss World' remains a thunderous classic and 'Skinny Little Bitch' proves she can still write a pop-punk anthem.

But it's not all quite there, yet. As the set careers to its close, it becomes obvious the only person with a desire to carry on performing is Courtney; her band have decidedly had enough. The tender 'Crying' is completely ruined by her band fumbling to find the right chords. Maybe it just shows a pieced-together line-up doesn't necessarily have the heart to go the distance. Finishing with 'Never Go Hungry Again', Courtney's voice is completely torn, so she invites die-hard fans onstage to lend their vocals. Of course, they're as tuneful as a dead sparrow and Love has no option but to sing. "I am sacrificing London for you, Glasgow," she declares. Something tells us The Boss would frown against such short-termism. Still, you can't blame a girl for trying. ***Jamie Crossan***

Big Mouth The noise from the crowd



Christie Vernal, 19, Glasgow

"My friend dragged me along. She says the band changed her life and wanted me to understand why. Now I do!"

Did you like what she was wearing?

"Oh yeah, only Courtney could pull off that number."

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On The Road With NME RADAR TOUR

We join Hurts, Darwin Deez and Everything Everything as they head out around the UK working their guns and working them crowds



DANNY WORTH, NEALE SMITH

PRESTON, 53 DEGREES

TUESDAY, APRIL 27

We're on some unspecified stretch of motorway between Glasgow and Preston when Darwin Deez suddenly bounds into the seat next to us, dangles an opened packet of roast chicken-flavoured crisps in front of our eyes and asks, "Guess what's in here?"

'Crisps' seems too obvious an answer, 'the drugs' perhaps too presumptive for a man we just met a couple of hours ago. Instead, when we peer inside we find a maroon-coloured orb of rice and meat; the room-temperature remains of last night's chilli.

"Foil-packed for freshness!" beams Deez between mouthfuls. "It's delicious."

Twenty-four hours. That's all it took for Darwin Deez to start eating day-old chilli from crisp packets. Welcome to the NME Radar Tour.

When we arrive in Preston a few hours later, we can tell instantly that it will take tour headliners Hurts far longer to plumb to Deez's level of decadence. Reclining on the plush red leather seats of their luxurious tourbus, vocalist Theo Hutchcraft seems almost embarrassed by the disparity in travel arrangements: "We keep trying to find excuses to get off this bus," he says, not entirely convincingly.

This is Hurts' first full tour ever. They've played five or six shows before this, but in much bigger venues, and on a much grander scale. This tour is something of an acid test for them.

"We wanted to see how the music works in a small environment," explains Theo. "In these venues, you'd think it would be claustrophobic, but it works. We've got everything in there, we've got our opera singer, we've managed to cram all the lights in... the thought we've put into it means that with the stuff we've got, we can transform these venues, make them into something unique."

And presumably, a tourbus of this magnitude makes maintaining style levels that much easier?

"You pay the price for vanity on this tourbus," laughs the immaculately turned-out Hutchcraft. "There's only one mirror on it and it's halfway up the steepest staircase you've ever seen. We'll be wearing neckbraces with our suits if we're not careful."

"Besides," he says, pulling a comb out of his pocket with astonishingly dextrous sleight-of-hand, "As long as you've got one of these, anything is possible."

Bringing Hurts' extravagant stage show to a venue like 53 Degrees is a feat in itself and, although songs such as 'Wonderful Life' and 'Better Than Love' were obviously written with bigger stages in mind, it works surprisingly well.

Sophistication comes at a price, though, and it's not Hurts who are paying it: "All that equipment onstage means we don't have any space to do our choreographed dances," moans Cole Smith, Darwin Deez's elfin guitarist. "I mean, I've only got one guitar with me on this tour. Hurts have a whole trailer just for their lights."

Perhaps that's why Hutchcraft turns up after the show bearing a crate of beer for the other two bands and enquiring about Everything Everything bassist Jeremy's topsy-turvy stomach.

"I'm feeling better now," says Jeremy. "I took a little, um, anti-nausea tablet."

"An anti-nausea tablet?"

"Well, I don't want to say too much with the journalist here."

We make a mental note to get to know Everything Everything better.

MANCHESTER, ACADEMY 3

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 28

In retrospect, today may not have been the best day to 'get to know' Everything Everything. They've just suffered a massive gear malfunction that requires them to spend the day hunched over their laptops, fretting that they might not be able to play the gig tonight.

"It's nice having the other bands here," says frontman Jonathan. "Especially the Darwin Deez guys. They're always knocking around, being ridiculous. It lightens the mood."

He's speaking of the rigorous work-outs Darwin and his band do before every show; because we've had a few beers by this point and forgotten that half of the band are super-fit Broadway dancers by trade, we join in, with some predictably disastrous results.

"You're getting it!" exclaims bassist Michelle encouragingly, "Keep going!"

But we've already given up, our arms trembling so violently we can barely turn a doorhandle. Watching Deez's show, however, you can see why they might need to go through this pre-show ritual every night; they put so much effort and energy into each performance, there really is no room for half-arsery.

Like the night before, their set is blighted by niggling sound problems, but that hardly seems to matter with songs as buoyant and joyous as 'Radar Detector' and 'Constellations'. They are stealers of hearts, right down to Darwin's insistence on manning the merch stall himself after every show: "I feel like, if someone pays money to come see us and wants to come up to me afterwards and have a chat, or give me a hug, it's kind of my job to go out and meet them," he says.

Despite their technical woes, Everything Everything also pull it together in admirable fashion for their hometown crowd, and their Afro-pop indie weirdness hints at a rather remarkable debut album a few months down the line. From the depths of despair this afternoon, they all seem chipper when we reconvene at The Deaf Institute for the tour's first proper night out, knocking back the beers and drunkenly talking politics.

"Say what you like about Maggie Thatcher," says guitarist Alex, "But she dragged this country into the 21st century."

While pushing Scotland and the northeast of England back into the stone age?

"Yes, but you've got to look at things on a national level..."

Perhaps politics, alcohol and post-gig triumphalism shouldn't mix. Nothing, however, is dampening the mood of optimism.

"We narrowly escaped disaster tonight," says Jonathan. "Provided our laptops keep working, and providing Hurts keep finding crates of beer, I've got a good feeling about the next couple of weeks..."

Barry Nicolson

View From The Crowd



David, autograph hunter

What are you doing here?

"I'm collecting autographs. I've only got one act on the NME tour so far... someone called Darwin Deez. I don't know the bands to be honest. It's more of a hobby. There's another band called Ash on in the Academy 2 tonight, so it's going to be a busy day."

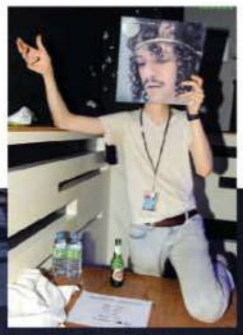
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▲ **Wednesday, 5pm, Manchester**
Darwin Deez's guitarist Cole Smith, Theo Hutchcraft and Darwin swap their rock'n'roll stories. In a car park



▶ **Tuesday, 7pm, Preston**
Darwin's Sleeveface



▲ **Wednesday, 6pm, Manchester**
Backstage. Fun Fact: Darwin's bassist Michelle and Caroline (EE's soundgirl) are the only females on the whole tour



▲ **Tuesday, 7.45pm, Preston**
Exercise is fun and good for you, kids! But not very rock'n'roll





▲ **Wednesday, 8.15pm, Manchester**
Still some room for Darwin Deez's synchronised dancing then



▶ **Wednesday, 9.45pm, Manchester**
Hurts' Adam plays his keyboard-disguised-as-a-piano – sneaky, eh?



▲ **Tuesday, 8.45pm, Preston**
Jonathan from Everything Everything gives it his, uh, everything



▲ **Tuesday, 8.35pm, Preston**
Darwin and Cole watch Everything Everything



▼ **Wednesday, 8.15pm, Manchester**
Darwin Deez picks up his most voluminous T-shirt award



▲ **Wednesday, 9pm, Manchester**
Everything Everything's Alex and Jonathan in mid-guitar duel



▲ **Tuesday, 9.30pm, Preston**
Hurts onstage with their opera singer. Enough said

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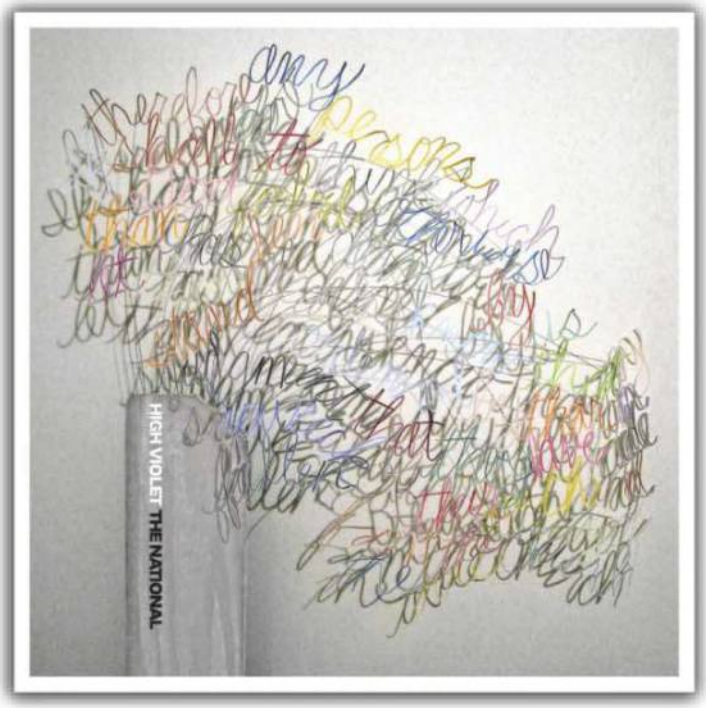
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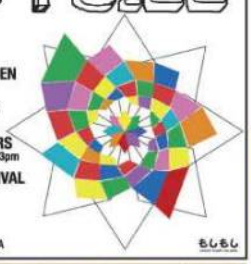
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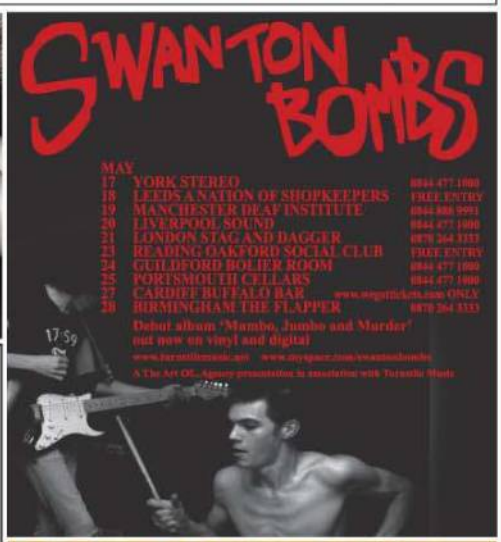
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Tue	08	LIVERPOOL O2 Academy	0844 477 2000	Wed	16	NORWICH Waterfront	01603 508 050
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MON	19	GATESHEAD SAGE 2	0191 443 4661
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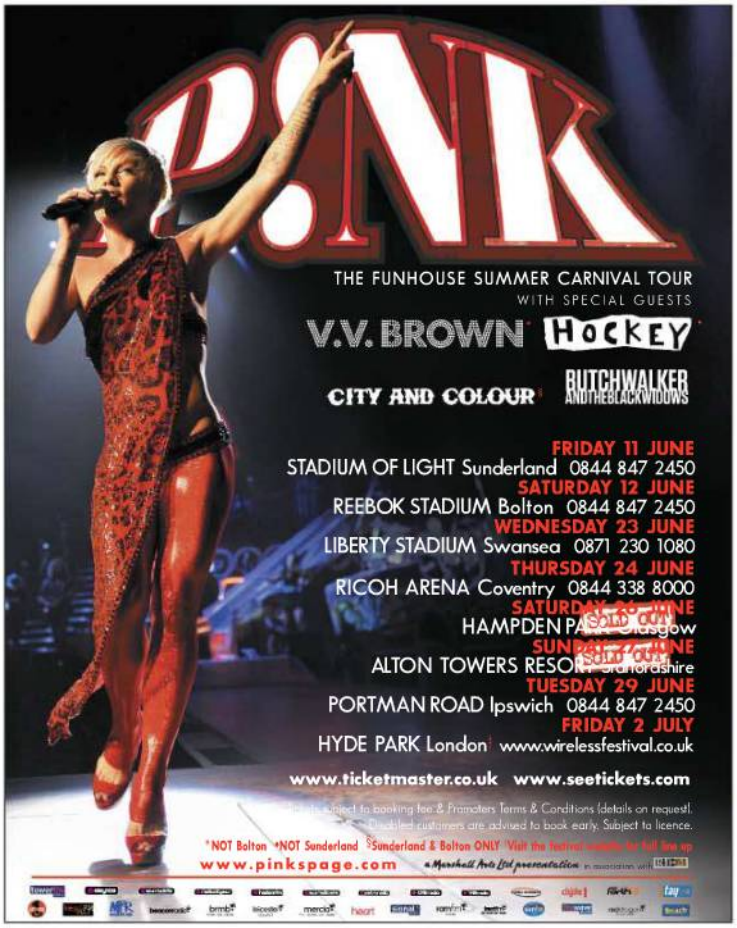
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LOU RHODES
SWIMMING
SPOTLIGHT KID

THE LAST.FM RISING STAGE

STEVE MASON
THE WAVE PICTURES
LISSIE ERLAND & THE CARNIVAL
MEGAPHONIC THRIFT RUGOSA NEVADA

MUSICIAN STAGE

JASON & THE SCORCHERS
DANNY & THE CHAMPIONS OF THE WORLD
ELIZA DOOLITTLE PEGGY SUE LIAM BAILEY
KRISTYNA MYLES KIRSTY ALMEIDA
PLUS ACOUSTIC CAFE

SATURDAY 14

MAIN STAGE

TINCHY STRYDER
THE GO! TEAM
STORNOWAY
TURIN BRAKES
DIANA VICKERS
AUTOHYPE
GAGGLE

INDOOR STAGE

THE FALL
THE WHIP
CARIBOU
TUNNG
LAURA VEIRS
THE WOODENTOPS
LIAM FROST
DOG IS DEAD

THE LAST.FM RISING STAGE

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ISBELLS KID ADRIFT WE SHOW UP ON RADAR
BLACK CARROT THE SOUVENIRS

MUSICIAN STAGE

FRANKIE & THE HEARTSTRINGS
TIFFANY PAGE GOLDHEART ASSEMBLY
HARPER SIMON THE LEISURE SOCIETY
ALEX HIGHTON
PLUS ACOUSTIC CAFE

SUNDAY 15

MAIN STAGE

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LOCAL NATIVES
THE LOW ANTHEM
JUNIP
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THESE FURROWS

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FRIGHTENED RABBIT
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ERRORS
THE BESNARD LAKES
SUMMER CAMP
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SKEPTA RIZ MC
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BAND AID

No dilemma is too big or small for NME's Resident Cognitive Disputational Resolutionist (aka Agony Uncle) Pete Cashmore



THEY AIN'T US!

A really shit, ugly band has the same name as us, and people are getting us (awesome) mixed up with them (shit). What to do?
The Originals, Birmingham

Ah yes, a classic dilemma. Do you know, for example, that at one stage there were no less than five bands trading under the name Misty's Big Adventure? And I say to you what I said to them: you have to kill them. Or at the very least kill one of them in a sufficiently grisly manner that it sends out a message to any other bands who would steal your name. Or, you COULD register the name as a trademark. ***Uncle Pete***

COLLATERAL DAMAGE

Our guitar player has recently taken to smashing up my drumkit onstage. The crowd loves it, but it's damaging me in the wallet. Any ideas?
Sticksman, Cardiff

It's never nice when a bandmate doesn't respect your kit – Muse, for example, were nearly rent asunder when Dominic kept pissing on Matt's guitars for a laugh – so you have to give your guitarist a reason to not hit them. Make him identify with your drums. To that end, I would cover them with photographs of sad-faced kittens peering out of piles of laundry. If he can trash *that* then frankly, he needs to be locked up ***Uncle Pete***.

HE'S TOO SEXY

It's readily apparent that my missus fancies our new lead singer, while I am just a lonely bassist. Am I doomed to lose her?
Imminent Cuckold, London

Firstly, thank you for getting the word 'cuckold' into *NME*. Secondly – and I am trying to be sensitive here – yes, you are doomed to lose her, or at the very least, know that he has done the sex with her. He is the singer, you are the bassist, there is a natural order that says that he gets all the sex, even if it's with your partner. Just accept your fate. The best-case scenario is that he'll let you sit in and watch him. ***Uncle Pete***

Fancy having your band problems solved once and for all? Just send your musical quandaries to *bandaid@nme.com*, and Uncle Pete will endeavour to assist

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GIG GUIDE

THE UK'S BIGGEST GUIDE TO THE WEEK AHEAD

Edited by Ash Dosanjh

BOOKING NOW



STANDON CALLING

STARTS: Hertfordshire Standon Lordship, August 6

DON'T MISS

Festival-wise, big and bombastic is good, but it's not necessarily better. Take the humble Standon Calling for example; starting life as a low-key birthday barbecue it's somehow turned into one of the best (and most underrated) events in the festival calendar. Now in its seventh year, each Standon has possessed its own unique identity. This year the theme is 'Murder On The Standon Express', so get set for a little mystery from a line-up that includes These New Puritans, Liars, Buena Vista Social Club, Efterklang, Casiokids, Fool's Gold, El Guincho, Silver Columns and Dry The River. Along with its interactive theatres and installations, storytelling events and cinema, Standon Calling is as boutique a festival as they come.

NME.COM/festivals



DEAD MEADOW

STARTS: Brighton Freebutt, May 24

The psych-rock trio from Washington DC visit the UK with album 'Three Kings'.

NME.COM/artists/dead-meadow



MELTDOWN

STARTS: London Southbank Centre, June 11

Richard Thompson curates; acts include Elvis Costello and Rufus Wainwright.

NME.COM/festivals



ROBYN

STARTS: London Heaven, June 17

The electro chanteuse departs her native Sweden to tour new album 'Speak Your Body (Body Talk Pt 3).

NME.COM/artists/robyn



MOUNTAIN MAN

STARTS: Manchester Deaf Institute, June 22

The alt.folk girl trio get set to release debut LP 'Made The Harbor' on June 14.

NME.COM/artists/mountain-man



THE CORAL

STARTS: Birmingham Alexandra Theatre, July 12

The Wirral outfit head out in in support of 'Butterfly House', due on July 12.

NME.COM/artists/the-coral



TINARIWEN

STARTS: Birmingham Town Hall, July 28

The Tuareg musicians bring their exquisite world music to the UK following last year's 'Imidiwan'.

NME.COM/artists/tinariwen



BEIRUT

STARTS: Edinburgh Picture House, August 22

Zach Condon comes out of hiding to bring his band of Balkan folk wonders to the UK.

NME.COM/artists/beiruit



JONSI

STARTS: Bristol Colston Hall, September 1

Sigur Rós' Jónsi Birgisson goes it alone with a spectacular live show following the release of solo single 'Animal Arithmetic'.

NME.COM/artists/jonsi



BIFFY CLYRO

STARTS: Aberdeen AECC, November 25

Following their tour with The Twilight Sad, the Scottish trio prove their rock credentials by announcing a string of stadium dates.

NME.COM/artists/biffy-clyro



BLACK REBEL MOTORCYCLE CLUB

STARTS: Nottingham Rock City, December 3

'Beat The Devil's Tattoo' is out, now the San Franciscan outfit head to the UK.

NME.COM/artists/black-rebel-motorcycle-club



YOU ME AT SIX

STARTS: Edinburgh Corn Exchange, December 5

The British punk-poppers embark on a headline tour following the release of album number two, 'Hold Me Down'.

NME.COM/artists/you-me-at-six



SUEDE

STARTS: London O2 Arena, December 7

Following their acclaimed show at the Royal Albert Hall for the Teenage Cancer Trust, the Britpop legends' reunion continues as they confirm another massive headline date.

NME.COM/artists/suede

GETTY, EMILIE BAILEY, PIETER M VAN HATTEM

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PICK of the WEEK

What to see this week? Let us help



DUM DUM GIRLS

STARTS: London Luminaire (Thurs)

NME PICK

Even with the ranks of US garage-rock revivalists growing ever more populous, Dum Dum Girls stand head and shoulders above the rest. Under the auspicious rule of Kristin Gundred, this LA-based outfit have made a debut record that spices the garage-rock formula with shoegazing guitars, not to mention the anecdotes of love lost and found or the emotional-rollercoaster vocals that alternately lift and deflate your heart. 'I Will Be' also pulls off a trick that has eluded so many contemporary bands: namely, the perfect marriage of '60s girl-group harmonies and scuzzy guitar noise. A night of contradictory thrills is inevitable.
WWW.NME.COM/artists/dum-dum-girls







Everyone's Talking About MY DISCO

STARTS: London Lexington (Thurs)

Australian math-rockers My Disco are nothing if not candid. After singer Liam Andrews battled Hodgkin's Disease, they titled their debut album 'Cancer', while its follow-up, 'Paradise', featured 'You Came To Me Like A Cancer Lain Dormant Until It Blossomed Like A Rose'. Expect dark humour and artful minimalism.
WWW.NME.COM/newmusic

Don't Miss THE BRIAN JONESTOWN MASSACRE

STARTS: London, 02 Shepherd's Bush Empire (Fri)

With newest album 'Who Killed Sgt Pepper?', drone-rock perennials The Brian Jonestown Massacre diversify into ambient experimentation, terrace-chanting and teutonic electro-pop. Dramatic gigs are likely, as always.
WWW.NME.COM/artists/brian-jonestown-massacre

Radar Stars WARPAINT

STARTS: London Luminaire (Wed)

Let battle commence. This Californian four-piece may be masters at producing swooning and delicate experimental indie rock, but it's the kind of heart-achingly beautiful music that will leave its mark on you forever. These dates are their first in the UK since Warpaint released 'Exquisite Corpse' last year.
WWW.NME.COM/newmusic

DAVE MA, ANDY WILLSHER, PIETER M VAN HATTEM, DAN DENNISON, DANNY NORTH, TOM MARTIN

GIG GUIDE KEY:

+14 = 14 AND ABOVE +16 = 16 AND ABOVE AA = ALL AGES CS = CLUB SHOW
FR = FREE ENTRY WA = UNDER 14S WITH AN ADULT
UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED ALL GIGS ARE 18+

WEDNESDAY

May 12

NME RADIO Ian Dury's son Baxter, and Tim Noakes from *Dazed & Confused* are today's Forum guests, dissecting this week's singles, from 5pm

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Metallica Odyssey 028 9073 9074
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The Shoes O2 Academy 3 0870 771 2000 WA
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The Clean Freebutt 01273 603974
BRISTOL
Jesca Hoop The Cooler 0117 945 0999
Tremor Louisiana 0117 926 5978
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The Bronx/Mariachi El Bronx Junction 01223 511511
James Blackshaw/Hauschka Junction 2 01223 511511
Underground Heroes Portland Arms 01223 357268
CANTERBURY
Erland & The Carnival The Farmhouse 01227 456118
CARDIFF
Duke Special Glee Club 0870 241 5093
CHELMSFORD
Empty Eclipse Barhouse 01245 356811
CORK
Crevecoeur Cyprus Avenue 00 35321 427 6165
Grada The Pavilion 00 35321 427 6228
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Mission Of Burma Crawdaddy 00 3531 478 0225
Rod Stewart The O2 01 819 8888
GLASGOW
Chuck Prophet King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279
Omar Souleyman Stereo 0141 576 5018
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Rise Boileroom 01483 440022
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LONDON
Art Vs Science Monto Water Rats 020 7837 4412
Atari Teenage Riot Electric Ballroom 020 7485 9006
Best Coast Old Blue Last 020 7613 2478
Billy Brandt Sir Richard Steele 020 7483 1261
Blackchords Good Ship 020 7372 2544
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The Groanbox Boys Slaughtered Lamb 020 8682 4080
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Westlife The O2 Arena 0870 701 4444
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Stornoway Hare And Hounds 0121 444 2081

BOURNEMOUTH
Marina And The Diamonds Old Fire Station 01202 503888

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The Temper Trap 02 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA
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Eliza Carthy Musician 0116 251 0080
Lucky Soul Firebug 0116 255 1228

LONDON
Anarchist Wood Legion 020 7613 3012
Avenge Thee Scream Lounge 020 8667 0155
The Big Pink Forum 020 7344 0044
Booka Shade KOKO 020 7388 3222
Dead Royals 93 Feet East 020 7247 6095
Deez Nuts Underworld 020 7482 1932
Dum Dum Girls Luminaire 020 7372 7123


The Big Pink, Forum, London

Florence And The Machine Apollo 0870 606 3400
Frontera Good Ship 020 7372 2544
Genitorturers Garage 020 7607 1818
Grammatics MacBeth 020 7739 5095
Hate Ashbury Arch 635 020 7720 7343
Hexstatic Cargo 0207 749 7840
Jason Collett Windmill 020 8671 0700
Joan Armatrading Fairfield Halls 020 8688 9291
Kikipau 12 Bar Club 020 7240 2622
Kiss Wembley Arena 0870 060 0870
Kyte Hoxton Square Bar & Kitchen 020 7613 0709
Matt Berry Heaven 020 7930 2020
Mission Of Burma Dingwalls 020 7267 1577
The Molotovs Garage (Upstairs) 0871 230 1094
My Disco/Factory Floor/Snowman The Lexington 020 7837 5387
Newlsands Arts Club 020 7460 4459
The Owl Project/Volcano The Bear Concrete And Glass 0871 230 1094
Pavement/Broken Social Scene 02 Academy Brixton 0870 771 2000 WA
Piney Gir Slaughtered Lamb 020 8682 4080
The Quails Monto Water Rats 020 7837 4412
The Rebel Barden's Boudoir 0770 865 6633
Renny Field Troubadour Club 020 7370 1434
Rodeo Massacre Borderline 020 7734 5547
Scarlet's Well/The Vatican Cellars Bull & Gate 020 7485 5358
Sonny Simmon/John Edwards Trio Café Oto 0871 230 1094
Think About Life Barfly 0870 907 0999
Third Eye Blind 02 Shepherds Bush Empire 0870 771 2000 WA
Westlife The O2 Arena 0870 701 4444
Wormrot Old Blue Last 020 7613 2478

MANCHESTER
Grails Ruby Lounge 0161 834 1392
Konono No 1/Bass Clef Club Academy 0161 832 1111
The Words Night And Day Café 0161 236 1822

NEWCASTLE
Pennywise 02 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA

NORTHAMPTON
The Futureheads Roadmender Centre 01604 604222

NORWICH
Alabama 3 Waterfront 01603 632717
Lightspeed Champion Arts Centre 01603 660352

NOTTINGHAM
A Sunny Day in Glasgow Spanky Van Dyke 0115 924 3730
The Ocean Bottom Nightmare Band Bodega Social Club 08713 100000
Polar Bear Rescue Rooms 0115 958 8484
Stacey Earle & Mark Stuart Maze 0115 947 5650

PORTSMOUTH
Band Of Skulls/Thomas Tantrum Wedgewood Rooms 023 9286 3911

SELBY
The Needful Things Riverside Bar 01757 700656

SHEFFIELD
Rihanna Hallam FM Arena 0114 256 5520
Ten Second Epic 02 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA

SOUTHAMPTON
Fuzzbox Joiners 023 8022 5612

ST ALBANS
Nadir Rising Horn 01727 853143

SUNDERLAND
Underground Heroes Independent 0191 565 8947

SWINDON
Diablo 13 The Rolleston 01793 534238
Mimi Soya 12 Bar 01793 535713

TUNBRIDGE WELLS
Warpaint The Forum 08712 777101

YORK
Mark Morriss Stereo 01904 612237
Martin Harley Band Fibbers 01904 651 250

FRIDAY
May 14

BARNSTAPLE
The Cheek Inn On The Square 01271 311 940

BATH
Pete Lucas Moles 01225 404445
Seth Lakeman Komedia 0845 293 8480

BEDFORD
The Tendons Esquires 01234 340120

BELFAST
65daysofstatic Mandela Hall 028 9024 5133

BIRMINGHAM
Ali Campbell O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA
Eli 'Paperboy' Reed & The True Loves O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA
The Godfathers O2 Academy 3 0870 771 2000 WA

BRIGHTON
Great Escape Festival: Ruby Suns/Peggy Sue/Sky Larkin/ Silver Columns/Gold Panda/ Dam Mantle/Warpaint Various venues 0871 230 1094

BRISTOL
Erland & The Carnival Louisiana 0117 926 5978
Fuzzbox Fleece 0117 945 0996
Lightspeed Champion O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA

CAMBRIDGE
Mr Hudson Junction 01223 511511
Volcano The Bear Portland Arms 01223 357268

CARDIFF
Leddra Chapman Glee Club 0870 241 5093

CHELMSFORD
The Dead Formats Barhouse 01245 356811

COLCHESTER
Fooled By Chance The Twist 01206 562 453

CORK
Altan Opera House 00 35321 270022
Edge Of Heaven Clancy's 00 35321 427 6097

DUBLIN
The Books Button Factory 00 3531 670 9202
Foals Academy 00 3531 877 9999
Manteca Cobblestone 00 3531 872 1799
Simon Fagan Whelan's 00 3531 475 9372

EDINBURGH
Eric Bibb Queen's Hall 0131 668 2019
Mr Scruff Potterow Union 0131 650 2656
The Temper Trap Picture House 0844 847 1740
We Were Promised Jetpacks Sneaky Pete's 0131 225 1757

GLASGOW
The Charlatans Barrowlands 0141 552 4601
Epico O2 ABC2 0141 204 5151 WA
Grails Nice'n'Sleazy 0141 333 9637
Gretchen Peters King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279
My Disco CCA 0141 352 4900
Pennywise O2 ABC 0870 903 3444 WA
Scragfight O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA
Thomas Truax 13th Note Café 0141 553 1638

GLOUCESTER
Hugh Cornwell Guildhall Arts Centre 01452 503050

GUILDFORD
Boo Hewerdine Boileroom 01483 440022

HARLOW
Rollback Republic Square 01279 305000

IPSWICH
These Are End Times PJ McGinty's 01473 251 515

LEEDS
Holy State Cardigan Arms 0113 274 2000
Jon Gomm Brudenell Social Club 0113 243 5866
The Neat Joseph's Well 0113 203 1861
The Pattern Theory Packhorse 0113 245 3980
Undercover The Owl 0113 256 5242

LEICESTER
Hot Club Of Cowtown Musician 0116 251 0080

LONDON
Alabama 3 Forum 020 7344 0044
Ali Love 93 Feet East 020 7247 6095
Band Of Skulls Electric Ballroom 020 7485 9006
Brian Jonestown Massacre 02 Shepherds Bush Empire 0870 771 2000 WA
Chuck Prophet Borderline 020 7734 5547
Class Actress/Nattcu The Lexington 020 7837 5387
Complete Radio Silence Bull & Gate 020 7485 5358
Deva Premal Union Chapel 020 7226 1686
Diablo Swing Orchestra Underworld 020 7482 1932
Filthy Whisky Good Ship 020 7372 2544
Florence And The Machine Apollo 0870 606 3400

CLUB NME
LONDON
THE POSTELLES + THE CANDLE THIEVES
KOKO
0207 388 3222

Gotan Project O2 Academy Brixton 0870 771 2000 WA
The Illicit Scream Lounge 020 8667 0155
Later Rivals Rhythm Factory 020 7247 9386
Left With Pictures Cargo 0207 749 7840
The Pack Ad Windmill 020 8671 0700
Pama International Jazz Café 020 7916 6060
Po'Girl Luminaire 020 7372 7123
Some Velvet Morning 100 Club 020 7636 0933
Sonny Simmon Café Oto 0871 230 1094
Stars Of The Search Party O2 Academy 2 Islington 0870 771 2000 WA
Steve Hogarth Garage 020 7607 1818
The Telescopes 229 Club 020 7631 8310
The Trembling Bells Bush Hall 020 8222 6955
Vic Godard Buffalo Bar 020 7359 6191
Westlife The O2 Arena 0870 701 4444
When I Was Electric Barfly 0870 907 0999

MANCHESTER
Dum Dum Girls Sound Control 0161 236 0340
Francis Rossi Academy 2 0161 832 1111
The Mollies Night And Day Café 0161 236 1822

MINEHEAD
All Tomorrow's Parties: Broken Social Scene/Calexico/Marble Valley/Avi Buffalo/Spiral Stairs/ Surfer Blood/Mission Of Burma/ The Walkmen/Wooden Shjips Butlins 0871 230 1094

NEWCASTLE
Dinosaur Jr/Built To Spill O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA
Ten Second Epic O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA

NOTTINGHAM
Fozzy Rock City 08713 100000
The Wickets Old Angel Inn 0115 947 6735

OXFORD
Chiddy Bang O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA
James Blackshaw Holywell Music Room 0870 750 0659

PETERBOROUGH
I Only Date Models Met Lounge 01733 566100

PORTSMOUTH
Terry Reid Cellars 0871 230 1094

SOUTHAMPTON
The Chariot Joiners 023 8022 5612

STOKE ON TRENT
Bleached Wail Sugarmill 01782 214991

ST ALBANS
Junkyard Horn 01727 853143

SWINDON
Evita The Furnace 01793 534238
Hip Route The Rolleston 01793 534238
Midway Still The Vic 01793 535713
Snakebite 12 Bar 01793 535713

WAKEFIELD
Limeshark Snooty Fox 01924 374455

WINCHESTER
Gold Future Joy Machine The Railway 01962 867 795

WOLVERHAMPTON
Diana Vickers Wulfrun Hall 0870 320 7000
Paradoxic Little Civic 0870 320 700

YORK
Die So Fluid Stereo 01904 612237
Jim Bob Fibbers 01904 651 250
Wilko Johnson The Duchess 01904 641 413


Foals, Academy, Dublin

www.WorldMags.net & www.Journal-Plaza.net

SATURDAY
May 15

ABERDEEN
Mr Scruff Warehouse 0844 847 2319
St Deluxe Café Drummond 01224 624642
BATH
The Cheek Moles 01225 404445
BEDFORD
The Godfathers Esquires 01234 340120
BELFAST
Peter Green Spring & Airbrake 028 9032 5968
Rod Stewart Odyssey 028 9073 9074
The Undertones Queen's University 028 9024 5133
BIRMINGHAM
Pennywise O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA
The Pipettes O2 Academy 3 0870 771 2000 WA
BOURNEMOUTH
Ray Davies Pavilion 01202 456456
BRADFORD
The Needful Things Gasworks Bar 01274 732 200
BRIGHTON
Alessi's Ark Ocean Rooms 01273 699069
Chase And Status Dome 01273 709709
Erland & The Carnival Komedia (Upstairs) 01273 647100
Marina And The Diamonds Concorde 2 01273 673311
Young Guns Komedia 01273 647100
Great Escape Festival: You Say Party! We Say Die!/Broken Social Scene/Mother Mother/The Leisure Society/Sarah Blasko/Silver Columns/Oui Love/Crocodiles Various venues 0871 230 1094
BRISTOL
Alabama 3 O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA
Real Estate Thekla 08713 100000
CAMBRIDGE
Swarn Amongst Portland Arms 01223 357268
CARDIFF
Clinigol Clwb Ifor Bach 029 2023 2199
I Am Hope Barfly 029 2066 7658
COLCHESTER
Godsized The Twist 01206 562 453
CORK
Cathy Davey The Pavilion 00 35321 427 6228
Kele Okereke Cyprus Avenue 00 35321 427 6165
DERBY
Rugusa Nevada The Victoria Inn 01332 74 00 91
DONCASTER
Stacey Soloman Racecourse 01302 304 200
DUBLIN
Eskimo Joe Academy 00 3531 877 9999
Ham Sandwich Whelan's 00 3531 475 9372
65daysofstatic Crawdaddy 00 3531 478 0225
EDINBURGH
The Debuts The Electric Circus 0131 226 4224
Piney Gir Voodoo Rooms 0131 556 7060
EXETER
Midway Still Cavern Club 01392 495370
FROME
The Fall Cheese & Grain 01373 455420
GLASGOW
Blue Nova O2 ABC2 0141 204 5151 WA
The Bucky Rage 13th Note Café 0141 553 1638
GLOSSOP
Nat Johnson And The Figureheads Globe 01457 852417
GRIMSBY
Jaded Heart Yardbirds Club 07771520374
GUILDFORD
Jaakko & Jay Boileroom 01483 440022
HARLOW
The Filaments Square 01279 305000
HITCHIN
The Mavis Krank Club 85 01462 432767
IPSWICH
A Horse Called War PJ McGinty's 01473 251 515
LEEDS
The Bundles/Dum Dum Girls Brudenell Social Club 0113 243 5866
Dinosaur Jr/Built To Spill O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA
Flood Damage New Roscoe 0113 246 0778
The Heavens Carpe Diem 0113 243 6264
Joe Carnall & The Book Club Cockpit 0113 244 3446
Redwood Thinkers The Owl 0113 256 5242
The Sundogs Maguires 0113 240 4016
LIVERPOOL
6ixtoys O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA

CLUB NME
BOSTON
THE CAPSHUNS + THE BIXBY KNOLLS
THE FENWAY RECORDINGS SESSIONS AT GREAT SCOTT'S
0871 230 1094

LONDON
Ali Campbell Indigo @ The O2 Arena 0870 701 4444
Cats And Cats And Cats Luminaire 020 7372 7123
Cymande II Bloomsbury Ballroom 020 7404 7612
El Goodo Windmill 020 8671 0700
Florence And The Machine Apollo 0870 606 3400
Flyer Bull & Gate 020 7485 5358
Fozzy Garage 020 7607 1818
Freestylers Rhythm Factory 020 7247 9386
Gaba Kulka Cargo 0207 749 7840
Hawksley Workman Borderline 020 7734 5547
Human Race Get Off Your Knees O2 Academy Brixton 0870 771 2000 WA
Ivy Paige Bush Hall 020 8222 6955
Joanna And The Wolf Barfly 0870 907 0999
Jozef Van Wissem Café Oto 0871 230 1094
Katalina Kicks Punk 0871 971 5418
Los Delinquentes O2 Academy Islington 0870 771 2000 WA
Michael Buble The O2 Arena 0870 701 4444
Mike Sanchez 100 Club 020 7636 0933
Sniper Good Ship 020 7372 2544
Stamford Hill Gun Club Arts Club 020 7460 4459
Ten Second Epic O2 Academy 2 Islington 0870 771 2000 WA
Third Eye Blind Forum 020 7344 0044
The Velvetians 93 Feet East 020 7247 6095
Wishbone Ash O2 Shepherds Bush Empire 0870 771 2000 WA
MANCHESTER
Fuzzbox Club Academy 0161 832 1111
James Blackshaw Band On The Wall 0161 832 6625
White Rabbits Night And Day Café 0161 236 1822
MINEHEAD
All Tomorrow's Parties: Pavement/Camera Obscura/Fiery Furnaces/Blitzen Trapper/Boris/Atlas Sound/The Drones/Mark Eitzel/Faust/Still Flyin'/Monotonix Butlins 0871 230 1094
NEWCASTLE
The Blessings Star And Shadow Cinema 0191 2610066
Little Comets O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA
NOTTINGHAM
Patchwork Grace Maze 0115 947 5650
NUNEATON
Enraged Queen's Hall 02476 642 454
POOLE
The Eighties Matchbox B-Line Disaster Chords 0871 230 1094
PORTSMOUTH
The Racketteers Wedgewood Rooms 023 9286 3911
PRESTON
Hugh Cornwell 53 Degrees 01772 893 000
SHEFFIELD
Mr Hudson Plug 0114 276 7093
Sarah Mac Leadmill 0114 221 2828
SOUTHAMPTON
I Am Ghost Joiners 023 8022 5612
Pendulum Guildhall 023 8063 2601
SWINDON
The Dacoits 12 Bar 01793 535713
GMT The Furnace 01793 534238
TUNBRIDGE WELLS
Alice Rose The Forum 08712 777101
WAKEFIELD
Castrovalva Escobar 01924 332000
Helgrind Snooty Fox 01924 374455
WATFORD
The Scratch Flag 01923 218413
WOLVERHAMPTON
Delphic Wulfrun Hall 0870 320 7000
Dreadzone Little Civic 0870 320 700
WREXHAM
No Room For Heroes Glyndwr University 019 78 29 30 72
YEADON
Splinter Tut'n'Shive 0113 250 6052
YORK
Ian McNabb The Duchess 01904 641 413

SUNDAY
May 16

ABERDEEN
Paridian Warehouse 0844 847 2319
Penguins Kill Polar Bears Café Drummond 01224 624642
BATH
Phil King Moles 01225 404445
BELFAST
A Sunny Day in Glasgow Queen's University 028 9024 5133
Pendulum Ulster Hall 028 9032 3900
Rod Stewart Odyssey 028 9073 9074
BIRMINGHAM
Brian Jonestown Massacre O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA
Dinosaur Jr/Built To Spill O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA
I Am Ghost O2 Academy 3 0870 771 2000 WA
Johnny Flynn & The Sussex Wit Glee Club 0870 241 5093
Stylus Boy Hare And Hounds 0121 444 2081
BRIGHTON
Six Gallery Freebutt 01273 603974
BRISTOL
Detroit Social Club O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA
CAMBRIDGE
Neil Cowley Trio Junction 2 01223 511511
CARDIFF
Marina And The Diamonds Millenium Music Hall 0871 230 1094
Ray Davies St David's Hall 029 2087 8444
CORK
Sandi Thom The Pavilion 00 35321 427 6228
65daysofstatic Cyprus Avenue 00 35321 427 6165
DUBLIN
Kele Okereke Academy 00 3531 877 9999
Peter Green Olympia 00 3531 679 3323
EDINBURGH
James Blackshaw Roxy Art House 0871 230 1094
GLASGOW
The Bundles O2 ABC2 0141 204 5151 WA
Fuzzbox King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279
Jim Bob Nice'n'Sleazy 0141 333 9637
Paradox 13th Note Café 0141 553 1638
White Rabbits Stereo 0141 576 5018
GUILDFORD
Grown Ups/Hearts Under Fire Boileroom 01483 440022
HAMPTON COURT
Simply Red Hampton Court Palace Festival 0871 230 1094
LANCASTER
Dum Dum Girls Library 01717 3942651
LEEDS
Archie Bronson Outfit Brudenell Social Club 0113 243 5866
The Quails Royal Park Cellars 0113 274 1758
Ryan Spendlove Joseph's Well 0113 203 1861
TV Smith New Roscoe 0113 246 0778
LIVERPOOL
Azriel O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA
The Temper Trap O2 Academy 0870 771 2000
LONDON
Abjeez Bush Hall 020 8222 6955
Adelaide's Cape Enterprise 020 7485 2659
Angelique Kidjo Barbican Hall 020 7638 8891
Anoushka Shankar Jazz Café 020 7916 6060
Austin Lucas/Alan Tyler & The Lost Sons Of Littlefield Windmill 020 8671 0700
Fabolous Indigo @ The O2 Arena 0870 701 4444
Flight Of The Conchords Apollo 0870 606 3400
Hot Club Of Cowtown 100 Club 020 7636 0933
James Gray Good Ship 020 7372 2544
Juan Martin Flamenco Ensemble Union Chapel 020 7226 1686
Media Circus Barfly 0870 907 0999
Michael Buble The O2 Arena 0870 701 4444
RJD2 Scala 020 7833 2022
Society Halfmoon 020 8780 9383
Todger/The Fetts Bull & Gate 020 7485 5358
MANCHESTER
Alabama 3 Academy 2 0161 832 1111
Benji Boko Ruby Lounge 0161 834 1392
Rihanna Evening News Arena 0161 950 5000
MINEHEAD
All Tomorrow's Parties: The Fall/The Clean/The Dodos/Tim Chad And Sherry/Pierced Arrows/3ds/Boris/Terry Reid/Matt Sweeney/The Raincoats/Grails/Endless Boogie/The Authorities/The Enablers/Wax Fang Butlins 0871 230 1094
NEWCASTLE
Thomas Truax The Cumberland Arms 0191 265 6151
NORTHAMPTON
Mr Hudson Roadmender Centre 01604 604222
NORWICH
Diana Vickers Waterfront 01603 632717
NOTTINGHAM
Blessed By A Broken Heart Rock City 08713 100000
El Draco Maze 0115 947 5650
OXFORD
The Eighties Matchbox B-Line Disaster Bullingdon Arms 01865 244516
PORTSMOUTH
The Sunshine Underground Wedgewood Rooms 023 9286 3911
SHEFFIELD
The Vortex University 0114 222 8777
SOUTHAMPTON
North Atlantic Oscillation Joiners 023 8022 5612
WAKEFIELD
Disciple 32 Snooty Fox 01924 374455
WOLVERHAMPTON
Erland & The Carnival Slade Room 0870 320 7000
YORK
Harrys Gym Stereo 01904 612237
Little Comets Fibbers 01904 651 250


The Eighties Matchbox B-Line Disaster, Bullingdon Arms, Oxford

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MONDAY
May 17

NME RADIO Filling in for Chris Martin all this week is Firas, who'll be bringing a show packed with the latest indie hits and timeless classics, from 7pm


Chiddy Bang, Electric Circus, Edinburgh

BATH
British Sea Power Komedia 0845 293 8480
Lafaro Moles 01225 404445
BELFAST
Kele Okereke Spring & Airbrake 028 9032 5968
Pendulum Ulster Hall 028 9032 3900
BIRMINGHAM
Detroit Social Club O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA
BRIGHTON
Tim Hecker Freebutt 01273 603974
Wolf Parade Concorde 2 01273 673311
BRISTOL
Terry Reid Thekla 08713 100000
CAMBRIDGE
Active Child Portland Arms 01223 357268
Dinosaur Jr/Built To Spill Junction 01223 511511
CARDIFF
Colours Of One Buffalo Bar 02920 310312
Parenthetical Girls 10 Feet Tall 02920 228883
DUBLIN
Sandi Thom Whelan's 00 3531 475 9372
Thieves Like Us Crawdaddy 00 3531 478 0225
EDINBURGH
Chiddy Bang The Electric Circus 0131 226 4224
Eli 'Paperboy' Reed & The True Loves Bongo Club 0131 558 7604
EXETER
Vanadium Cavern Club 01392 495370
GLASGOW
The Cheek King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279
Dum Dum Girls Stereo 0141 576 5018
Revolver O2 ABC2 0141 204 5151 WA
GUILDFORD
Ben Montague Boileroom 01483 440022
LEEDS
Delphic Metropolitan University 0113 283 2600
Johnny Flynn & The Sussex Wit Cockpit 0113 244 3446
LIVERPOOL
The Godfathers O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA
LONDON
Blitzen Trapper Borderline 020 7734 5547
Boris Garage 020 7607 1818
Broken Social Scene Heaven 020 7930 2020
Crocodiles The Stag's Head 020 7739 6741
Eskimo Joe O2 Shepherds Bush Empire 0870 771 2000 WA
Flight Of The Conchords Apollo 0870 606 3400
Free Energy Monto Water Rats 020 7837 4412
Inge Thomson Slaughtered Lamb 020 8682 4080
Kai's Kats 100 Club 020 7636 0933
Lauren Pritchard Barfly 0870 907 0999
Legs Eleven 93 Feet East 020 7247 6095
Oh No Ono Luminaire 020 7372 7123
Omar Souleyman Scala 020 7833 2022
Seabear Garage (Upstairs) 0871 230 1094
Tatsuhisa Yamamoto Café Oto 0871 230 1094
Wintersleep The Lexington 020 7837 5387
MANCHESTER
Brian Jonestown Massacre Academy 2 0161 832 1111
Natty Ruby Lounge 0161 834 1392
NEWCASTLE
I Am Ghost O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA
NORWICH
Mr Hudson UEA 01603 505401
NOTTINGHAM
Former Ghosts/Cats And Cats And Cats Spanky Van Dyke 0115 924 3730
Hip Parade Rescue Rooms 0115 958 8484
OXFORD
The Casting Out O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA
PORTSMOUTH
Nik Kershaw Cellars 0871 230 1094
READING
The Eighties Matchbox B-Line Disaster SUB89 0871 230 1094
SALFORD
Real Estate Sacred Trinity Church 0161 834 2041
SHEFFIELD
Airship Plug 0114 276 7093
Diana Vickers Leadmill 0114 221 2828
SOUTHAMPTON
Defeater Joiners 023 8022 5612
SOUTHEND
Ray Davies Cliffs Pavilion 01702 351135
TUNBRIDGE WELLS
Belleville The Forum 08712 777101
WAKEFIELD
The Front Snooty Fox 01924 374455
YORK
Fuzzbox The Duchess 01904 641 413

TUESDAY
May 18

BELFAST
Eli 'Paperboy' Reed & The True Loves Queen's University 028 9024 5133
BIRMINGHAM
The Casting Out O2 Academy 3 0870 771 2000 WA
Crocodiles Hare And Hounds 0121 444 2081
Eric Clapton LG Arena 0121 780 4133
Sarah MacDougall Kitchen Garden Café 0121 443 4725
BRISTOL
Die So Fluid Fleece 0117 945 0996
Example O2 Academy 0870 771 2000 WA
CAMBRIDGE
For A Minor Reflection Portland Arms 01223 357268
CARDIFF
Francis Rossi Glee Club 0870 241 5093
North Atlantic Oscillation Barfly 029 2066 7658
CHELMSFORD
Haze Barhouse 01245 356811
DUBLIN
Dum Dum Girls Whelan's 00 3531 475 9372
Lostprophets Academy 00 3531 877 9999
Pendulum Olympia 00 3531 679 3323
EDINBURGH
The Wailing Souls Bongo Club 0131 558 7604
EXETER
Dweeb Cavern Club 01392 495370
GLASGOW
Brian Jonestown Massacre O2 ABC 0870 903 3444 WA
Dickvantimbirtwistle 13th Note Café 0141 553 1638
Natty Oran Mor 0141 552 9224
LEEDS
I Am Ghost Cockpit Room 3 0113 2441573
You Say Party We Say Die! Joseph's Well 0113 203 1861
LIVERPOOL
Dead And Divine O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA
LONDON
Birds Of Tokyo Barfly 0870 907 0999
The Cheek 100 Club 020 7636 0933
Delphic Electric Ballroom 020 7485 9006
Detroit Social Club Garage 020 7607 1818
Dinosaur Jr/Built To Spill O2 Shepherds Bush Empire 0870 771 2000 WA
FM Belfast/Run Toto Run/The Eyes In The Heat White Heat @ Madame Jo Jo's 020 7734 2473
Groove Dynamics Good Ship 020 7372 2544
Harrys Gym The Flowerpot 02074856040
Here We Go Magic The Lexington 020 7837 5387
The Hickey Underworld The Wilmington Arms 020 7837 1384
Hip Parade 93 Feet East 020 7247 6095
Ian King Roundhouse 020 7482 7318
Ingrid Olava Luminaire 020 7372 7123
The Lipstick Melodies Punk 0871 971 5418
Mama's Gun Jazz Café 020 7916 6060
Maria Rita KOKO 020 7388 3222
Nevermore O2 Academy Islington 0870 771 2000 WA
Paul Dempsey Monto Water Rats 020 7837 4412
Real Estate/Ganglians Cargo 0207 749 7840
Tim Hecker Café Oto 0871 230 1094
Turbo Fruits Old Blue Last 020 7613 2478
We Walk On Ice/The Woo!worths/Dead Dog In Black Bag/Missing White Women/Sky Larkers Proud Galleries 020 7482 3867
Wild Palms Camp Basement 0871 230 1094
Wolf Parade Borderline 020 7734 5547
The 3D's Windmill 020 8671 0700
MANCHESTER
Holy Fuck Deaf Institute 0161 330 4019
Midas Fall Ruby Lounge 0161 834 1392
NEWCASTLE
Rod Stewart Metro Radio Arena 0870 707 8000
NORWICH
Fuzzbox Arts Centre 01603 660352
Marina And The Diamonds Waterfront 01603 632717
OXFORD
Japandroids Jericho Tavern 01865 311775
PORTSMOUTH
Jim Bob Cellars 0871 230 1094
PRESTON
Soulfly 53 Degrees 01772 893 000
SHEFFIELD
The Godfathers O2 Academy 2 0870 771 2000 WA
Saving Superman Mentholmans 0114 276 5550
SOUTHAMPTON
Emarosa Joiners 023 8022 5612
YORK
The Delays The Duchess 01904 641 413
Martha Tilston Fibbers 01904 651 250

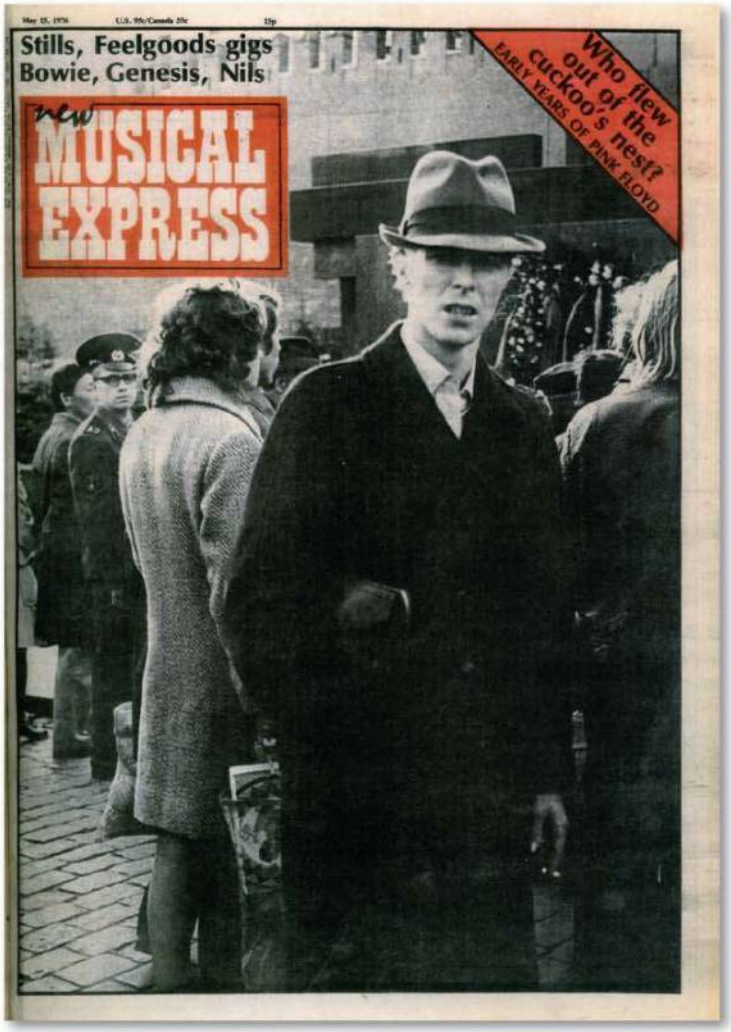

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THIS WEEK IN 1976

BOOS FOR BOWIE, LIL' PHIL COLLINS, RAMONES ROCK



NARKED SIGHT OF THE CROON

"If detachment was Bowie's objective," writes Max Bell of the Thin White Duke's sixth and final night at Wembley Empire Pool, "then he succeeded in creating his own unique vacuum."

Oh dear. This review comes a week or so after the infamous 'Victoria Station incident', where Bowie is alleged to have made a Nazi salute to fans waiting for him. The main problem expressed here, though, is not this. It is simply the somewhat stale nature of his live show. January '76 saw the release of the transitional 'Station To Station' (goodbye plastic soul, hello experimentation), while shortly after these concerts a Berlin-based purple period begins with 'Low'. At present, however, the Dame appears "trapped in the images of his own eclectism". At Wembley he does not play 'Young Americans' nor 'Golden Years' nor 'Wild Is The Wind'. Much of the 'Ziggy Stardust'-era material, meanwhile, is rendered soulless by a band whose "empathy lies in their slick drilling rather than an affinity with the notes they're called upon to play." Bell's piece concludes with the observation that "he can't decide whether to be Sinatra, James Brown or himself".

Time for a change, in other words.



IS SMALL BEAUTIFUL?

In what is described as a sequel to 'Can Public School Boys Rock'N'Roll?', *NME*'s Steve Clarke asks the question that's been worrying the diminutive the world over. Or rather, makes good-hearted fun of the Phil Collins-fronted Genesis. "Collins is a little guy with a likeable, if basically anonymous face," he notes. "Peter Gabriel he isn't."



HEY HO, LET'S GO!

Nick Kent gushes over the Ramones' self-titled debut album, at this point only available on import. "My angle on this opus," he writes. "Simply, 'Ramones' is an object lesson in how to successfully record neanderthal hard rock." He adds, "Ramones really could shut down the likes of Kiss and their horrendous ilk."

Also In The Issue That Week

- Abba are top of both the NME Singles and Albums charts, with 'Fernando' and their 'Greatest Hits' respectively.
- A tour of the UK by Stevie Wonder in support of 'Songs In The Key Of Life' is announced, details to be finalised.
- In the Classifieds section, a small live advert reads: 'SEX PISTOLS are at the 100 Club. Tuesday May 18th and 25th at 8pm.'
- A pictorial strip in the *Thrills* section is headed 'The Changing Faces Of Keef'. Which does exactly what it says, except one of them is Patti Smith. Arf!

NME

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THE LEGENDARY NME CROSSWORD

TAXING THE FINEST MINDS IN ROCK'N'ROLL FOR 60 YEARS

Compiled by Trevor Hungerford

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CLUES ACROSS

1+4A White with, in the main, yellow streaks (3-2-7)
9 Paul _____, aka 'Bonehead', of Oasis' original line-up (7)
10 Yorkshire band formed by two brothers, Danny and Richard McNamara (7)
11 Random articles that include mention of a guitarist with The Mars Volta (4)
12 'O Maybe I' could name Lewis Bowman's band (6-4)
14+33A Eric's system for somehow finding an old goth rock band (7-2-5)
16+22A Rap act that teamed up with both The Beach Boys and Chubby Checker for hits in the '80s (3-4)
18 The man that got upset by The Wildhearts in 1997 (6)
20 Goldfrapp powered their way into the charts with this (6)
21+35A Air providing every personal requirement (3-1-4)
22 (See 16 across)
24 One of the Greenwood brothers from Radiohead (5)
25 Speaker able to appear in person at Two Door Cinema Club (1-3-4)
29 'Alas I Cannot ___', Laura Marling musically out of her depth (4)
31 Primal Scream's big shot family where "*Every brother is a ___, every sister is a ___*" (4)
33 (See 14 across)
34 (See 3 down)
35 (See 21 across)

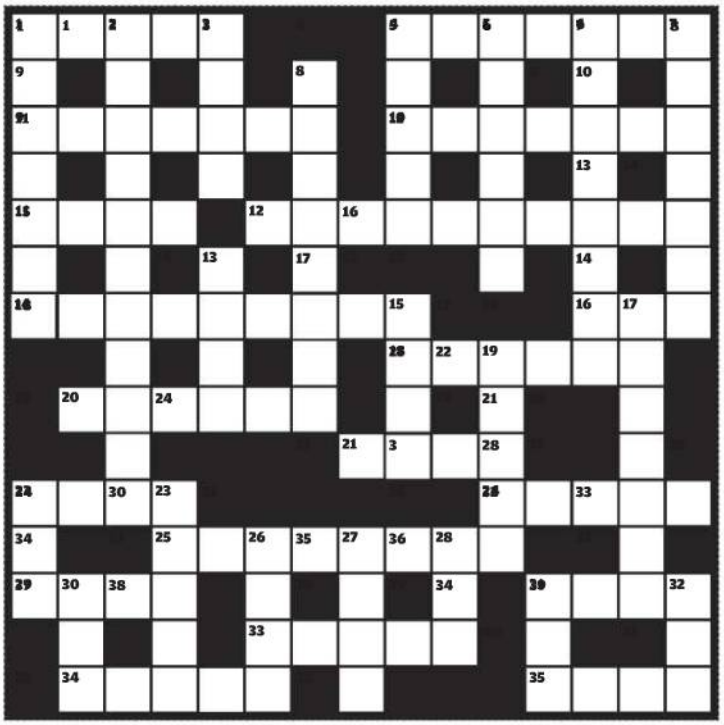
CLUES DOWN

1 Teenage Fanclub's latest album in honour of legendary instrumental group? (7)
2 Mick Jagger and Keith Richards not so happy in passing their composition on to Marianne Faithfull (2-5-2-2)
3+34A "*She's standing in the ashes at the end of the world, ___ ___ blowing through her hair*", Bright Eyes (4-5)
4+19D Crack hit EP, perhaps, from US rock band (5-5)
5 Jah _____, not a steady member of PiL (6)
6 The genuine existence of both an album and single by Simple Minds (4-4)
7 Her best arrangement is to get an Australian group who had '70s hit with 'Howzat' (7)
8 Identification problem for The Strokes (2-4-2)
13 He's given us 'Mellow Gold', 'Mutations' and 'Modern Guilt' (4)
15 Their latest album is 'Your Future, Our Clutter' (4)
17 "*Well, I go out somewhere, then I come home again*", 2006 (7)
19 (See 4 down)
22 A drab issue includes mention of old indie band (3)
23 Namely a connection between Kaiser Chiefs, Klaxons and Biffy Clyro (5)
26 Albums 'Infinite ___' by Band Of Horses or 'Brothers In ___' by Dire Straits (4)
27 Go round to get a Feeder single (4)
28 A put-down for member of Editors (3)
30 "*Oh yeah, you're amazing, we think you're incredible, you say we're fantastic*", Kate Bush (3)
31 "*You don't have to believe me, I love you all the same, but you stole the __ from my heart*", Manic Street Preachers (3)
32 Part reduction for very old Elbow single (3)

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Simply cut out the crossword and send it, along with your name, address and email, marking the envelope with the issue date, before Tuesday, May 18, 2010, to the following address: Crossword, NME, 4th Floor, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU.

First correct one out of the hat wins a bag of CDs, T-shirts and books!



APRIL 17 ANSWERS

ACROSS
1 Starry Eyed, 6+10A Don't Go There, 11 Emerson, 12+13A Neon Neon, 16+8D Memphis Tennessee, 17+21D Ray Davies, 19 IRS, 20 Rancid, 22 Prince, 23 Fall, 24+34A Swell Maps, 29 So, 33 Arab, 36 Craven.

DOWN
1 Sigh No More, 2 Acts Of Man, 3 Reef, 4+35A Eyeless In Gaza, 5 Eleanor, 7 Obsessions, 9 Selway, 15 Thrills, 18+30A Apples In Stereo, 25+14A What A Waste, 26 Logan, 28+27D Marc Bolan, 31 Tune, 32 Ryan, 34 Me.



SEVEN INCH STORIES BY PHILLIP MARSDEN



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FANMAIL

YOU GET IN TOUCH, WE RESPOND, THINGS GET OUT OF HAND

Edited by Kev Kharas

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The Big Issue

Keeping us locked in email battle this week...

Win! THE LETTER OF THE WEEK WINS £50 TO SPEND AT zavvi.com



PERSONALITY CRISIS

From: Thomas Norris
To: NME
Gavin Haynes' recent piece on the election (*NME*, 1 May) highlighted something about the current state of British politics – namely, that it's dumbing down. How did we get to a point where votes are decided by whether a politician listens to DC hardcore or the Top 40? People need to use more rationale when making such big choices – it's not *The X Factor*.

From: NME
To: Thomas Norris
Thomas – the nadir of 'personality politics' for me was the emphasis placed on Gordon Brown's 'bigotgate' gaffe. Hilarity and party allegiance aside, what, if anything, does a propensity for calling members of the public 'bigots' tell us about a politician's ability to manage a country out of the financial doldrums? If the media must focus on personality politics, why hasn't more been made of the story surrounding Tory candidate Philippa Stroud, aka the woman who founded a church which believes homosexuality is a 'demonic possession'? – KK

From: Thomas Norris
To: NME
It saddens me greatly that the vile Philippa Stroud hasn't come under more high-profile fire, but I also fear that this type of personality-dominated politics is becoming increasingly prominent all across the democratic world.

From: NME
To: Thomas Norris
Either way, the election will have been decided by the time your letter appears in print. Fingers crossed the result hasn't been sealed by who's got the snazziest iPod sock, as UKIP's Lord Pearson of Rannoch has a fetching knitted red, white and blue number that could put him in worryingly good stead – KK

Get in touch at any of the above addresses, plus winners should email *letters@nme.com* to claim their prize.

HANGING AROUND

From: Robin Cruise
To: NME
With all the parties whinging about a hung parliament and a 'season of discontent', why not change the way we vote next time around? Whoever has the most Twitter followers, wins. Or maybe we should go back to our school days and send secret notes to everyone on the electoral register asking them to tick a box indicating which party they 'fancy'. What do you think?

From: NME
To: Robin Cruise
I'm not so keen on the Twitter option, Robin – it's a bit 'faddy', isn't it? – but the possibilities of that 'love vote' are intriguing. As we all know, love isn't 'faddy' in the slightest. Love is ETERNAL. So, forgetting for a moment your democratic right to a secret ballot, which of this year's candidates would you have thrown 'your weight' behind? Maybe you'd have voted tactically, to bolster the chances that your parliament turned out 'hung'? As a plus, maybe it'd dissuade BNP bigots from getting involved. Though the image of David Cameron and Nick Clegg winking their tiny little eyes together as they lob crumpled up 'love notes' is enough to turn my stomach – KK

From: Robin Cruise
To: NME
I'm pretty sure fads are the only way to pique young voters' interests these days. In fact, I think love *itself* is now a fad. For example, I love my Xbox 360 but I wouldn't take it out to Nando's, and I certainly don't play *Halo* by candlelight in a desperate bid to keep the love alive. I was 'behind' Lib Dem to be honest, only because Cameron and Brown's bickering made me want to see them broken. Also, Nick Clegg seems like the kind of guy who'd hang around after a frisky bike shed session and maybe buy me a KFC bucket.

From: NME
To: Robin Cruise
I don't think young voters, or even young *pre-voters*, are the idiots you make them out to be. I think the more that everyone in any position of power or responsibility, whether that be in government, the school canteen or – yes – *the media*, swallows the line that kids today can't concentrate on anything for more than two seconds, the more quickly our society will melt into stink-gas and salty tears – KK

From: Robin Cruise
To: NME
I'm not saying they're stupid, merely apathetic, and rightly so. We haven't got the movement that Obama had to get people interested. All we have is a Facebook Group called 'Cleggasauras'.

SEEING RED

From: Katie Baker
To: NME
I am writing regarding MIA's horrific new video. It depicts the mass genocide of ginger-haired adolescents. It claims to be a post-modern, neo-realistic take on race issues, yet glamorises violence towards a particularly small minority of red-haired people. Being red-haired myself, I find it hugely frustrating that this sort of discrimination towards ginger-haired people is allowed, even metaphorically, as it would be completely unacceptable

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STALKER
From: Jodiemae Finch
To: *NME*
This is me sitting on the knee of the LEGEND that is Peter Hook at Norwich UEA!

for this to be shown happening to any other minority. If you are willing to show you are the respectable music magazine you claim to be you should show your disdain for this piece of work immediately. I shall not dignify this piece of filth by calling it art... [*continues for another 300 words*]...

From: NME
To: Katie Baker
Well, hopefully this week's cover feature should give some kind of new context, Katie. Whether it serves to enrage you further or pacify, it's tricky to tell. Do keep us posted. Few people are questioning its shock value, bar Maya. That close-up of the young lad being blown into a few dozen different parts bordered on the sort of violence-porn you'd expect from a *Saw* flick. But surely you can see at least some irony in MIA's choice to highlight ethnic cleansing by blowing up redheads? If not, maybe you're being blinded by your own genes. And, if all 'the ginger minority' really has to complain about are some special effects in a music video, do they really need to be so arduously defended? – KK

SCROTUM ON THE TIMELINE
From: John-John Ribbeck
To: NME
Oh, seems I returned to 2007 for a brief and nauseating detour. Klaxons? A comeback, you say? *Really*?! This is who I should be looking forward to seeing this festival season, apparently. I particularly liked the mention of their Glastonbury comeback. I was at the festival and I can tell you approximately 12 teenage girls actually *cared*. We'll see how many people will be bothered after their second album flops like a pensioner's penis. Where were The Courteeners or Rifles previews? Now they're both proper festival bands. PS While you're back in '07, can you pick up Kings Of Leon's indie fanbase? Thnx.

From: NME
To: John-John Ribbeck
Come now, John-John – I truly believe Klaxons are capable of great things with their second. Give them a chance. They've shown they have imagination, at least, so they're well over halfway to being better than anyone you're into. Or you. How many teenage girls have ever cared about you? – KK

From: John-John Ribbeck
To: NME
I've known my fair share of teenage romance and heartache, don't worry about that. I will give the album a listen though, can't be much worse than MGMT's new one.

From: NME
To: John-John Ribbeck
Fair point – KK

ALL WHITE
From: Claire Gatt
To: NME
Side-projects are the new main projects nowadays, it seems. Don't believe me? Look at Jack White. He's got to be the busiest man in music. It seems like he's forming a new band every day at the moment. Can't he stop the ruse and just call his side-projects his day job already? Poor Meg seems to have been put out to pasture like the old dog in *Of Mice And Men*.

From: NME
To: Claire Gatt
I hear you Claire. Jack seems to have so many side-projects on the go at the moment that it's kind of like pop-spam, isn't it? Personally I'm finding it harder and harder to care about whatever new way Jack's found to communicate 'Get me, I'm a luddite!' this afternoon. Having been freed from Meg, you'd think he'd at least invest in an 808 or a sampler or something. Why the fuck not? What's he got to lose? At least that way he'd be surprising people. For instance, I'd love to hear Jack making some of the house or techno music pioneered in his home city, rather than the same old-timey sticky-fingered, blues'n'roll schlock – KK

From: Claire Gatt
To: NME
Why is Jack so scared of computers? I have been shunned by my peers recently because I have a debilitating phobia of buttons, but you don't see me having a fetish for zips. What I'd like to see him do is head into death metal territory. He could produce my boyfriend's band. I play keyboards. We're the Meg and Jack White of metal tbh.

From: NME
To: Claire Gatt
You're the Meg and Jack White of death metal? Claire, are you married to your brother? – KK

From: Claire Gatt
To: NME
No, we're definitely not siblings, I'll have you know! I mean that he does all the hard work while I sit around doing practically nothing but looking glum and hitting things.

From: NME
To: Claire Gatt
Sold – KK



STALKER
From: Erwin
To: *NME*
"This is me with Pete Doherty before his gig in Vienna! He told me about The Libertines' reuinon two days before it was official!! We stayed at his hotel the whole day, and it was one of the best days of my life."

Web Slinging

The highlight of this week's NME.COM blogs

YOU'RE INSPIRED BY U2, TOO?



It's depressing, but true – U2 are the most influential band of the last 25 years. Their 1991 album 'Achtung Baby' has been named the most influential record of the past quarter-century by US indie bible *Spin*. Initially, I was astonished. But once I'd thought about it, I realised the *Spin* team were right. Trouble is, that's a cause for angst, not celebration. U2 set the default mode for the next two decades of guitar music – sonically expansive yet lyrically evasive, 'emotive' yet meaningless. Today, thanks to U2, all bands with designs on the mainstream – Coldplay, Keane, Snow Patrol, even new Take That – sound broadly the same.
Luke Lewis, Deputy Editor, *NME.COM*
See the full write-ups on NME.COM

Best of the responses...

I'm not sure they've got it right. I get the whole thing of 'Achtung Baby' being an influence upon the glut of stadium-ready anthems and slightly arse lyrics since then (though Oasis are far worse when it comes to both), but U2 are entering the 'Stones since the '80s' phase of their career now – less prolific, living off their back catalogue, still selling out shows worldwide, but no longer movers and shakers.
Keith Talent

Another snarky comment about something that is popular. Sorry posers, that's what rock stars look like!
Sean

ARE THEY SHITE! It is clearly The Smiths, end of.
Michael

Not sure about your argument. Saying that U2 are rubbish for influencing shit bands is like saying Janis Joplin is shit because of Amy Winehouse.
Steve

As a longtime fan, I have to admit the points in the article ring fairly true as a criticism of U2.
Soundbite

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DOES ROCK'N'ROLL KILL BRAINCELLS?

TESTING MUSICIANS' MEMORIES AFTER A LIFETIME OF ABUSE

This Week TIM WHEELER, ASH



QUESTION 1

Which album did '1977' knock off the Number One spot?

"Was it George Michael?"

Wrong. Alanis Morissette's 'Jagged Little Pill'



QUESTION 2

What was the name of your third demo tape released in 1993, featuring 'Jack Names The Planets', 'Intense Thing' and 'Petrol' among other tracks?

"I know the exact order. 'Garage Girl' first, but there was a compilation after that. But 'Jack Names The Planets' was a remix of a version that was already on 'Shed' before it. There's only about four people who are an authority on those demos and I'm one of them."

Correct



QUESTION 3

What was the name of the secret track on '1977' that consisted of vomiting sounds?

"'Sick Party'. We were working on this track called 'The Scream', which was something we'd developed in Japanese elevators – we'd get in and start with a hum and then build up into a full-on raging storm of noise by the time you get to the floor you want. It was really satisfying when the doors open and you hear this scream reverberating around whatever space you were walking into. So we were working on this on acid, recording loads of weird voices, we were trying to fill up 48 tracks of spoken nonsense and screaming and then one of Mark [Hamilton, bassist]'s ideas was he was going to be sick, so we set up a really expensive microphone in the courtyard and he was puking and Owen [Morris, producer] was trying to piss. At one point I was dancing to it because I was tripping."

Correct

QUESTION 4

Complete the following lyric:

"I lie with candles in my bed, Brian Wilson in my head..."

"Um... *'Something something, Sharon Tate/ Dark Pacific palisades'*. I'll go crazy if I don't get this! Aw fuck!"

Half a point. "Dennis Wilson, Sharon Tate/Dark Pacific palisades"

QUESTION 5

In the video for 'Sometimes', what sort of establishment are you playing guitar in?

"We actually filmed it in an apartment, it was just a bedroom in someone's house and the ceiling fell in at one point."

Half a point. In the video the room represented a hotel

QUESTION 6

What did you write on the note you attached to the sex'n'drugs-fuelled video to 'Numbskull' that you filmed during your lost weekend in New York in 1999?

"'I've killed Bambi'. He needed killing. It was a good, crazy time. It was fun disappearing afterwards. Everyone was trying to track me down for about three weeks before I finally emerged. I always loved New York and that really sealed the deal."

Correct

QUESTION 7



Last year you played an A-Z tour of towns beginning with each letter of the alphabet. Where was U and which one was a cheat?

"Upper Norwood, and the cheat for X was Exmouth."

Correct

QUESTION 8

What was the first Ash song Charlotte Hatherley appeared on?

"'A Life Less Ordinary'. We recorded that one twice – we redid it when Charlotte joined."

Correct

QUESTION 9

Where was your instore signing session to accompany the release of 'You Can't Have It All'?

"Probably Virgin in London, right?"

Wrong. Virgin Belfast

QUESTION 10

Who wrote the sleevenotes to your greatest hits collection 'Intergalactic Sonic 7"s'?

"Were there sleevenotes? You did it!"

Correct. NME's Mark Beaumont

Total Score 7/10

"I'm glad. There were some tough questions in there."

INTERVIEW BY MARK BEAUMONT PHOTOS: GETTY, ANDY WILLSHER

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